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## A Transformation of the Venetian Ghetto

Beth Kostman  
*Syracuse University*

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A Transformation of the Venetian Ghetto

Beth Kostman

Thesis Prep

April 24, 1991

Advisor- Prof.Theodore Brown



## **Thesis Statement**

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**This** thesis is an exploration into the process of transformation in traditional cities. Through an analysis of existing conditions in the city, urban typologies structures may be revealed which can act as the basis for new interventions. Fundamental to this thesis will be the preservation and maintainance of the memories of a place while simultaneously transforming it with a coherent urban structure.



## Vehicle

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The vehicle for this thesis will be an analysis and transformation of the Venetian Ghetto.

The Venetian Ghetto represents an important landmark in the evolution of the Jewish people. For the first time in Europe in the 16th century, Jews were required to live within an enclosed quarter of the city, isolated from the rest of the population. Although Jews were never ceded permanent residence in the area, the Ghetto became a center of Jewish culture and daily ritual; a marketplace of goods, ideas and memories. The Ghetto, therefore, exists as a valuable piece in the long and evolving history of the Jewish people.

Although the gates of the Ghetto were eliminated in 1797, the area retains the atmosphere of oppression and isolation. The Ghetto of Venice stands in danger of becoming a 'museum' of the Jewish people, forever detached from subsequent transformations both typical of urban development and important relative to the movement and growth of the Jewish people. The intention of this thesis is to expose and maintain the physical growth, decay and changes present within the Ghetto and to propose a new urban structure that reflects the current condition of the Jews in the city.

## Program

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The program for this thesis will consist of institutions composing a coherent structure to transform the Venetian Ghetto. This transformation will begin to erode the internal, 'island-like' quality of the Ghetto that denies it's interaction with the rest of the city. A series of spaces and buildings will act independently as a unified sequence overlayed on the Ghetto, and dependently, as the system interacts with the existing conditions. The goal of the intervention will be to maintain the existing layers of history while transforming the Ghetto into a new and growing Venetian campo.

Possible programmatic elements include:

**Synagogue/Scuola:** The insertion of a primary institution of a synagogue/scuola responds to the needs of this thesis on several levels. First, the creation of an important institution within the Ghetto provides a missing community element for a now unified Jewish population, no longer divided by the national affiliations of the existing synagogues. Second, a synagogue as a prominent campo institution begins the transformation of the Ghetto from a frozen and closed assemblage to an open and evolving campo. Finally, a synagogue represents a celebration of the opening of the Ghetto gates in 1797, an event which marks both the freedom of the Jewish community within the city and reflects the living and growing nature of the Ghetto today.

**Market:** The Cannaregio sistiera, like other areas of Venice, receives boats full with produce and goods to serve the daily needs of the quarter. The Ghetto can provide a center for the arrival of these supplies while bringing back a traditional ritual of street life and activity inherent within a market complex.

**Bridge:** A new bridge in the Ghetto provides the opportunity to develop a literal as well as spiritual link to the city of Venice.

# HISTORY



## History of Italian Jewry

### Roman Empire

- First evidence of Jews found in epitaph of Jewish catacombs, 2nd century B.C.
- Substantial number in 100 B.C., mostly slaves
- Flourished under Caesar and Augustus; allowed to practice Judaism
- Arch of Titus bears the mark of the revolt of Judaea, a Roman triumph
- 4th century Christianity is adopted as official religion; Jewish life remains surprisingly stable
- Strange absence of literary and intellectual life before 9 century A.D.; only evidence is in tombstone ruins in Greek or Latin. Reveal low level of Hebraic literacy and high level of assimilation

### Ninth and Tenth Centuries- Byzantine Influence/ S. Italy

- All tombstones now in Hebrew; dramatic changes
- Hebraic revival seems to appear out of nowhere; evidence of writings, rabbinical learnings
- Important Palestinian layer of Italian Jews
- Italy becomes a point of origin and dissemination of Jewish mysticism

### Late Middle Ages -The Shift North

- 1100's almost all Italian Jews in the south; Pisa and Lucca the only Northern settlements
- Increased church influence in 1265 restricted Jewish activity and by the 14c Jewish life is severely reduced in the south(except in Rome, where the population remained constant)
- Before the 13c, Jews were forbidden in most of the north, but using the influence of money lending and the need for capital, Jews began moving north
- Jewish moneylenders became the mainstay of N.Jews; concentration of money into the hands of a few; supported all intellectual activities
- Now an important aspect of Jewish patronage of the arts
- Jews who made this move north were still Italian speaking; this internal move made assimilation much easier
- A small number of Jews in small political states facilitated maximum interaction between Christians and Jews
- Jews often employed in translation work; act as cultural mediators and had a large effect in the Latin intellectual world
- Although Jews were persecuted, they did fare much better in Italy than in other parts of Europe

### Renaissance Italy

- By the 15c, Jewish loan bankers are a noticeable element in N. Italy; can begin to see signs of Jewish communal activity
- immigration from Germany, Spain and S. France begins (Spanish expulsion in 1490)
- Marrano Jews from the Iberian peninsula arrive in 16c
- The increase in the number of Jews begins to disturb the populace but the local oppressive influence often quickly subsided
- Hostilities were counterbalanced by relations between Jewish and Christian intellectuals
- Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94) - Florentine philosopher who desired a better understanding of Jewish religion and text in order to study Christianity
- Interest in the Cabala, a place where universal truths could be found

### The Age of the Ghetto

- Pope Paul IV (1476-1559) issues many oppressive policies which hurt the Jews greatly; Jewish communities deteriorate rapidly
- Expulsion from Naples in 1541, papal states in 1569 (except Rome)
- First ghetto is established in 1516 in Venice
- 1555- Pope Paul IV orders all Jews to be confined to one area or street in all Italian cities
- Ghetto dates: 1555 Rome, 1571 Florence/Sienna, 1600 Verona, 1603 Padua, 1612 Mantua, 1624 Ferrara
- Ghettos led to an erosion of relations with Christians
- An internalization of Jewish culture begins, but it is unclear if ghettos are the cause
- Jewish mysticism and emphasis on acts of piety increases
- Ironically, within the confines of the Ghetto Jewish intellectual work increases, Latin/Italian literature proliferates
- Despite the hostilities of the Church, Italian Jewish communities become the publishing capitals of the Jewish world; often Christian printing presses have Jewish proofreaders
- The enclosed world of the ghetto becomes an open hospice for Jews from all over Europe; the ghetto becomes a marketplace of Jewish goods and ideas
- There is a constant combining of world culture with Jewish tradition within the Ghetto

## History of the Venetian Jews

-a presence of Jews in the region is recorded in Aquileia, Grado, and Concordia in the 4-5th centuries

-By the 11th and 12th century Venetian Jews had become an important trading center for the Levant; although Jewish merchants had their place in the lagoon, Venice never conceded permanent residence to Jews within the city

-In the 14th and 15th centuries, Jewish pawnbroker shops came into being, an activity forbidden to Christians but carried out by Jews

-Major communities of German and Italian Jews were set up in Mestre and other nearby cities, since Jews could only enter the city to conduct business

-From 1382 to 1397, German Jews were allowed to live in the city, a "favor" granted to help the poor of the Republic; the "condotta" system was established which allows residency for short periods of time

-Second half of the 15th century, the Council of Ten adopted a freer attitude towards the Jews; life was relatively serene although extremely heavy taxes were levied

-The early 16th century brought a new wave of hatred against the Jews; preachers incite people to demand mass expulsion but Jews had become too important economically

-Jews were not expelled but relegated to a closed quarter in the site of the new foundry ("getto" in Venetian); in 1516, 700 German and Italian Jews moved into the existing houses

-The ghetto was required to hire 6 Christian guards to watch the gates of the community, which were locked every evening

-A small independent community system was soon set up, with its own administration, Rabbi and synagogue

-The largest community of German Jews operated the Pawn Banks, while the Levantine Jews received more lenient treatment as merchants

-The Old Ghetto was established in 1541 to accommodate a new population of Spanish Jews, many forced converts; this soon became the largest population of the ghetto

-The early 17th century was a prosperous time for the Jews, who were left all trade with the East (and all the risks it entailed); trade in cloth, precious materials and valuable objects grew

-Positive conditions were reflected on a cultural plane and many famous Jewish writers and teachers

arose; literary salons, printing houses and important religious sermons attracted both Jews and non-Jews to the Ghetto

-The second half of the century brought a change in the Republic and the failing economy demanded heavy tributes from the Jews

-The situation gradually worsened in the 18th century until finally the moneylenders could no longer face up to their debts and were declared insolvent. Only a few large families prospered and the number of peddlers increased

-The last days of the Republic brought new restrictions and by 1777 the population was reduced to 1600 people

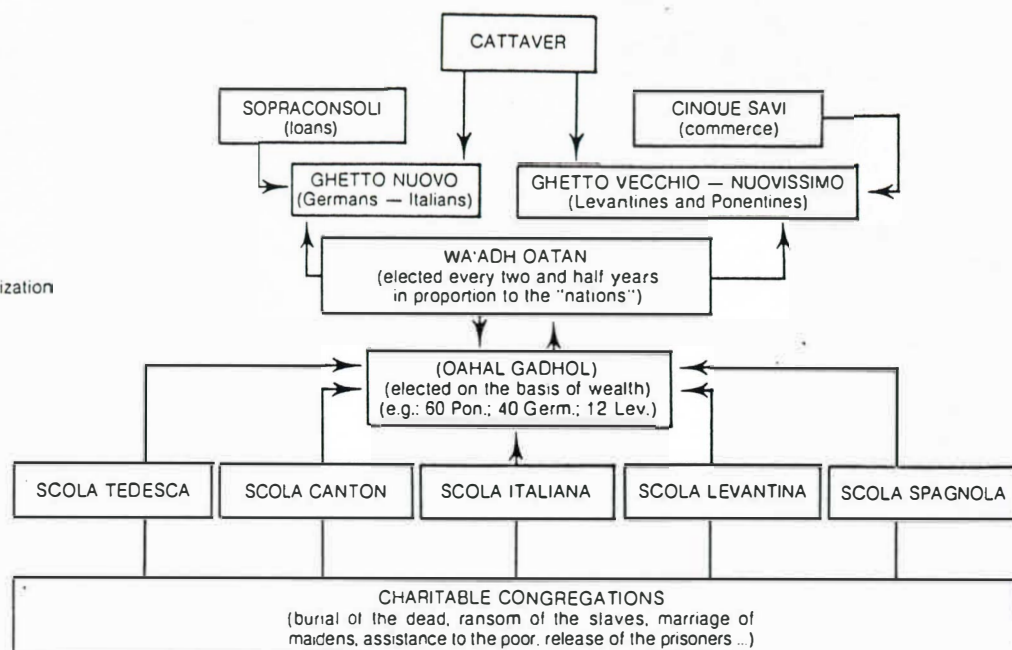
-In 1797 the gates of the ghetto were eliminated and the ghetto opened; it then assumed the name of "District of the Union"

-Only the poorest families remained in the ghetto; a typical Judean-Venetian jargon and a strong attachment to tradition was maintained

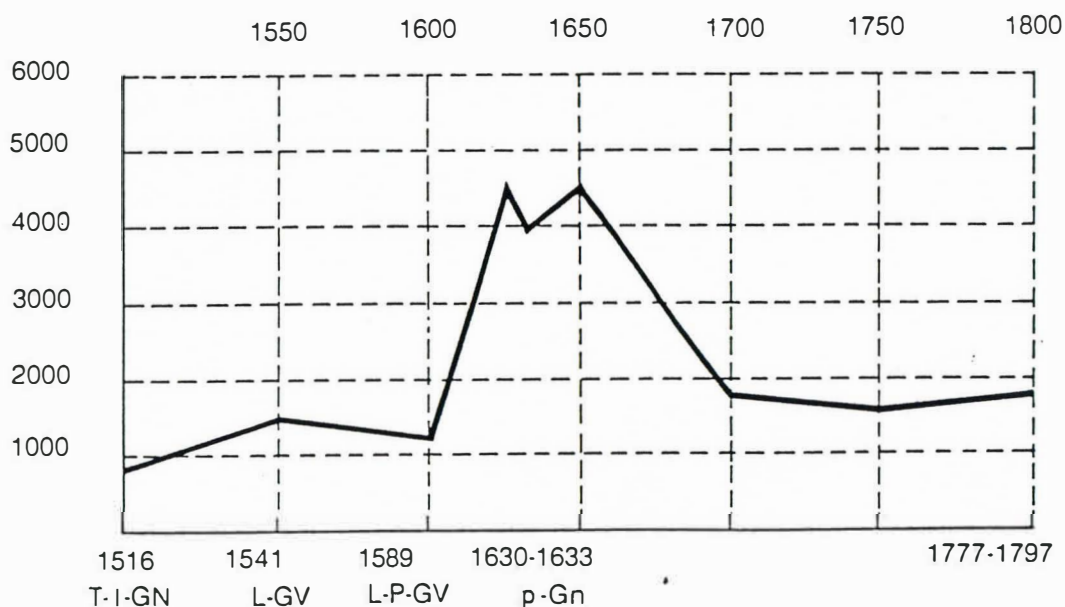
-The First World War compelled many Jews to leave the city; in World War Two and the Nazi persecutions destroyed almost a fifth of the Venetian Jews

-The Jewish community in Venice still exists in small numbers and the ghetto remains the central location for their institutions and community associations; even though Jews today are dispersed in all quarters of the city, the ghetto remains a point of unity and memory for the Venetian community

Chart of the Ghetto's internal organization



Graph of population development in the Ghetto (1516-1797)



Key: T = Germans, I = Italians, GN = Ghetto Nuovo, L = Levantines, P = Ponentine (Sephardim), GV = Ghetto Vecchio, p = Plague, Gn = Ghetto Nuovissimo



## The Venetian Ghetto

- 1515- Ghetto Nuovo; originally German Jews
- 1541- Ghetto Vecchio; Levantine, Spanish Jews
- 1633- Ghetto Nuovissimo; Sephardic Jews

Daily Life - During the day Jews were given limited freedom but were required at night to return to the Ghetto where the gates were locked and guarded until next morning. Five synagogues provided the internal structure for the community, each existing with their own Rabbi, school and language. The Ghetto Nuovo street life was extremely active, with constant movement about the 60 shops, 3 banks and 3 synagogues. The Ghetto Vecchio was calmer in contrast, where the international merchants turned life to interiors. The streets were continuously active, speaking in a typical jargon of Venetian, Spanish and Italian elements mixed with Jewish expressions. All Jews were required to wear a distinctive yellow sign and obliged to pay extremely heavy taxes without being able to enjoy the most elementary rights given to the rest of the population. The Venetian population, though, was never openly hostile and the Jews were able to exist in their own little world, linked by a common destiny.

Structure-The Ghetto stands at the overlap of three parishes: The Ghetto Vecchio in the S. Geremia parish; the Ghetto Nuovo in the S. Gerolamo parish; the Ghetto Nuovissimo in the S. Alvise parish. The area was originally used as a foundry for the mortars of the Republic until the 14th century. It was then abandoned as a closed sector where the debris of the furnaces was accumulated. The Jews occupied it in three days, adopting the existing houses for their own needs. The buildings were forced to develop upwards for lack of space (so-called Venetian skyscrapers) with the continual danger of collapse, fire and diffusion of epidemics.

Still today, one arrives at the Ghetto from the Fondamenta di Cannaregio, through a tiny portico; signs of the gate remain on its sides. It then opens into a long alley, Calle di Ghetto Vecchio, which receives very little sunlight. On either side rise extremely tall houses which still recall the old atmosphere of tight enclosure. The long alley leads to Campiello delle Scuole, an open space on which face the Spanish and the Levantine Synagogues. It was, before the enlarging of the Levantine School, originally symmetrical with a well in

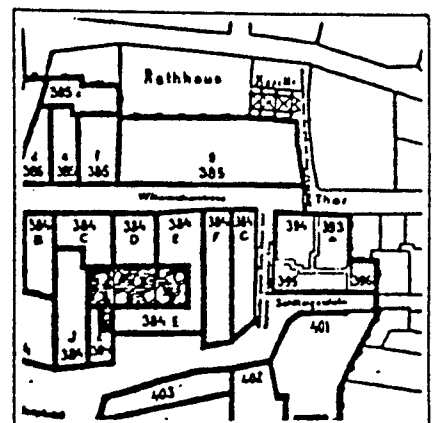
the center. The tallest building in Venice (7 stories) fronts the west side. On the south side sits the Spanish School and to the north stands the Levantine School.

Leaving the Campo of the Ghetto Vecchio and moving to Ghetto Nuovo, nearly all the buildings have undergone recent restoration, retaining only small fragments of the Study Hall of Leon da Modena and the House of Vivante, two important Jewish family palazzos. Two streets, the Calle Barucchi and the Calle dell'Orto are crossed before reaching the bridge that marks the end of the Ghetto Vecchio.

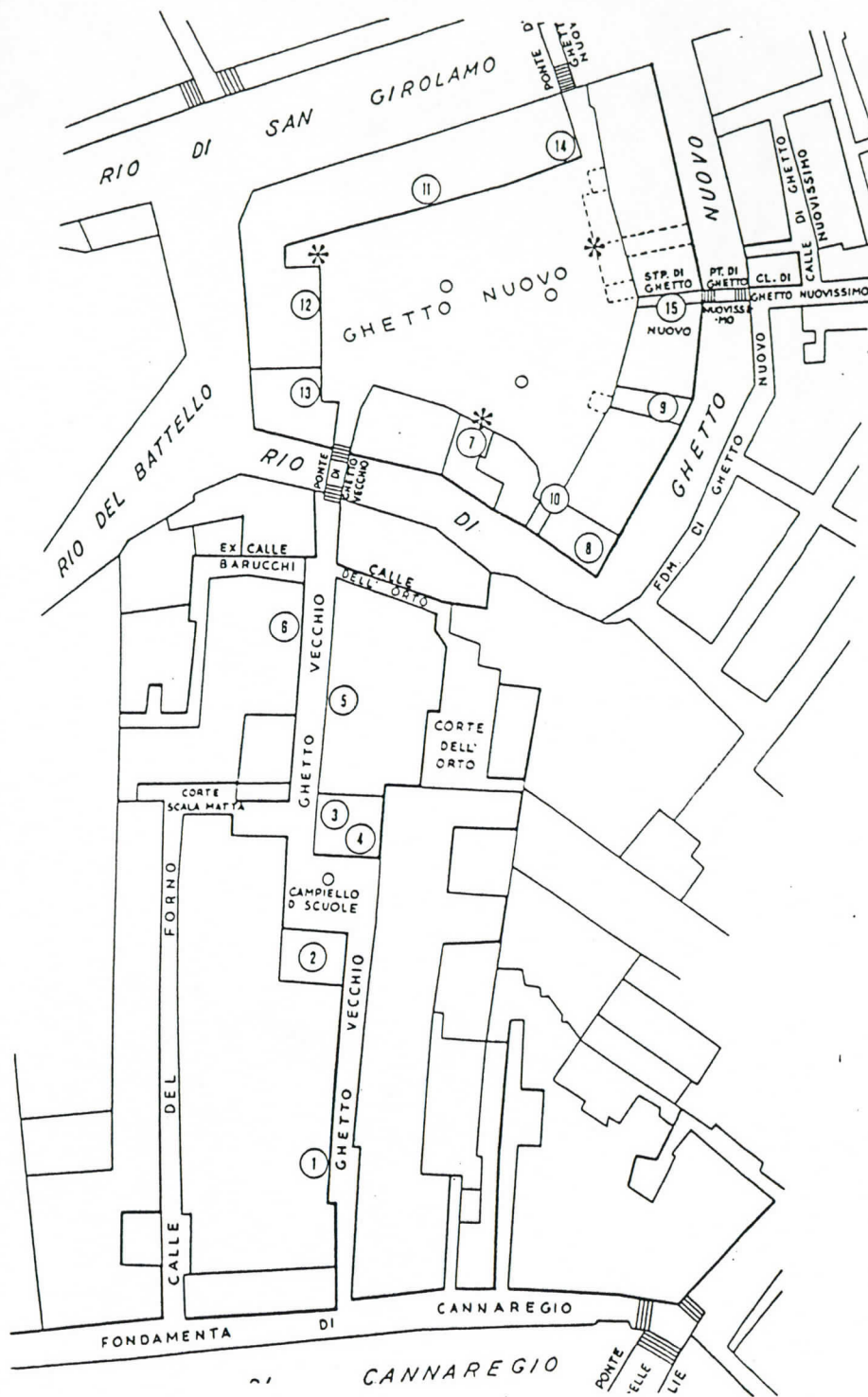
Crossing the Ponte di Ghetto Vecchio, one enters the Campo di Ghetto Nuovo, a large open space surrounded on three sides by the characteristic, although much restored, Ghetto residence towers. The north side was demolished during the last century to build the Israelite Home for the Aged. Three wells still remain in the campo along with several trees. On the west wall stands a contemporary memorial wall for the victims of the Holocaust. On the south face sits a small projecting porch which marks the Italian synagogue. In the south east corner of the campo lies the the Canton (French) synagogue, the German Synagogue and the new Museum of Jewish Art. Along the east edge of the campo stands the remains of the moneylender bank, the Banco Rosso, a low arcade with classically inspired pilasters.

At the original exit of the ghetto is another portico which would have been locked at night. Beyond this is a wooden bridge over the Rio di Ghetto Nuovo. Within the campo, there is a small alley which leads to the Ghetto Nuovissimo, formed of three blocks of houses and two alleys crossing in a "T". Several wealthy family palazzi still remain.

SITE

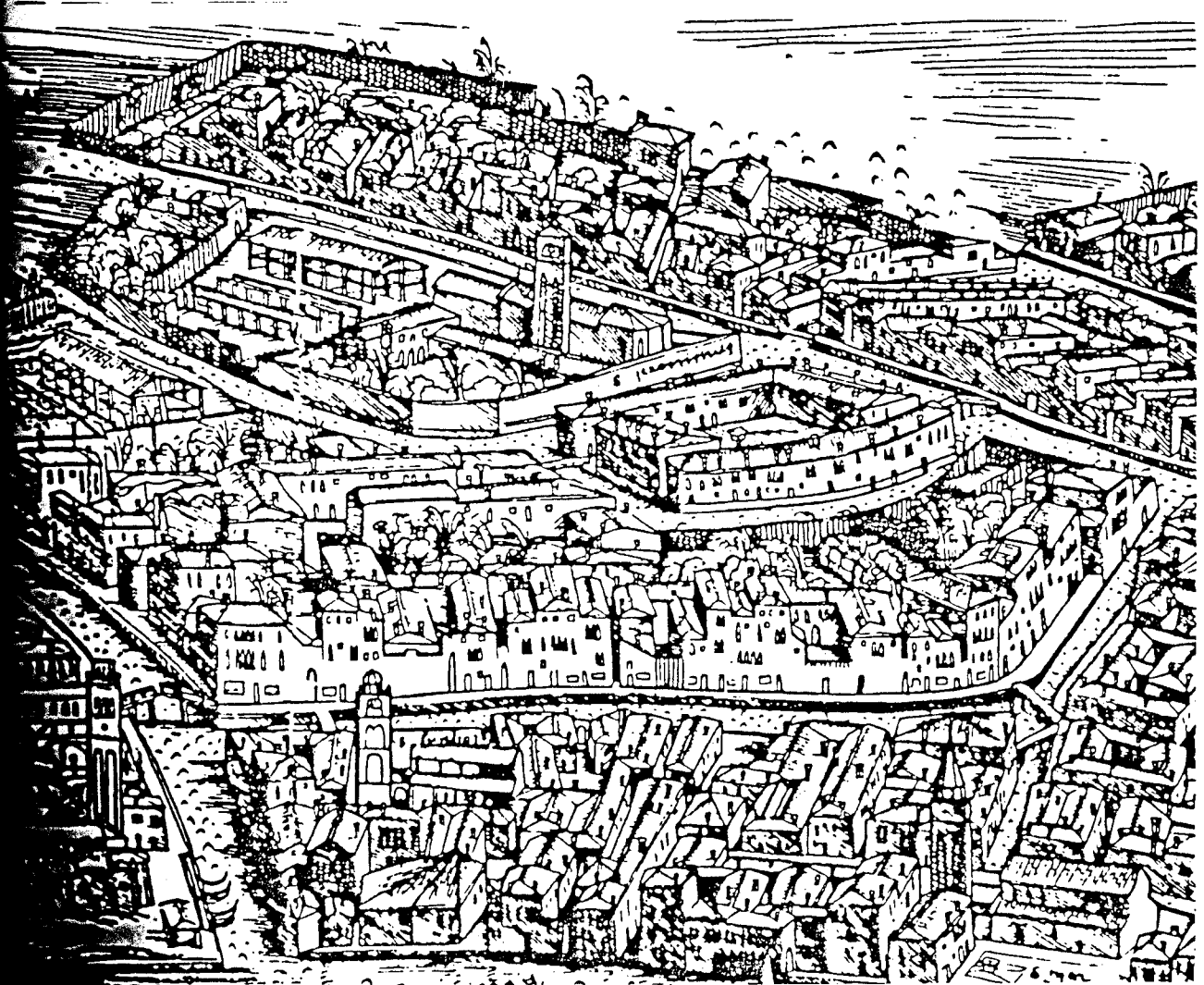




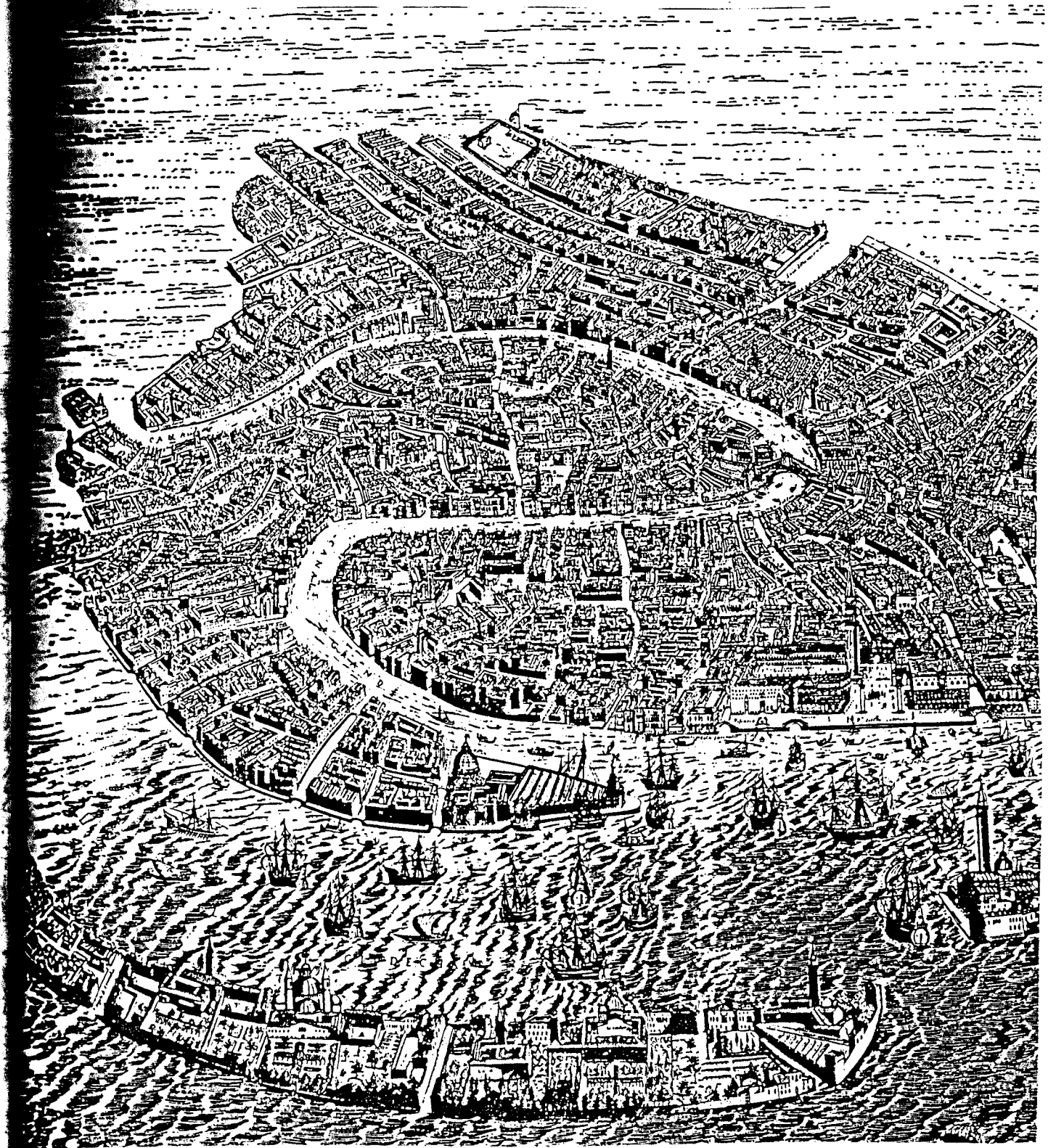


Map of the Venetian Ghetto

- 1 - The stone tablet in the Ghetto Vecchio
- 2 - Scola Spagnola
- 3 - Scola Levantina
- 4 - Scola Luzzatto (present site)
- 5 - Leon Modena Midhrash
- 6 - Vivante Midhrash
- 7 - Scola Italiana
- 8 - Scola Canton
- 9 - Scola Grande Tedesca - Museum of Hebrew Art
- 10 - The stone tablet in the Ghetto Nuovo
- 11 - Casa di Riposo Israelitica
- 12 - Holocaust Monument by Arbit Blatas
- 13 - Scola Mesullamim (original site)
- 14 - Scola Luzzatto (original site)
- 15 - Scola Kohanim (original site)
- \* - Sites of three pawnshops

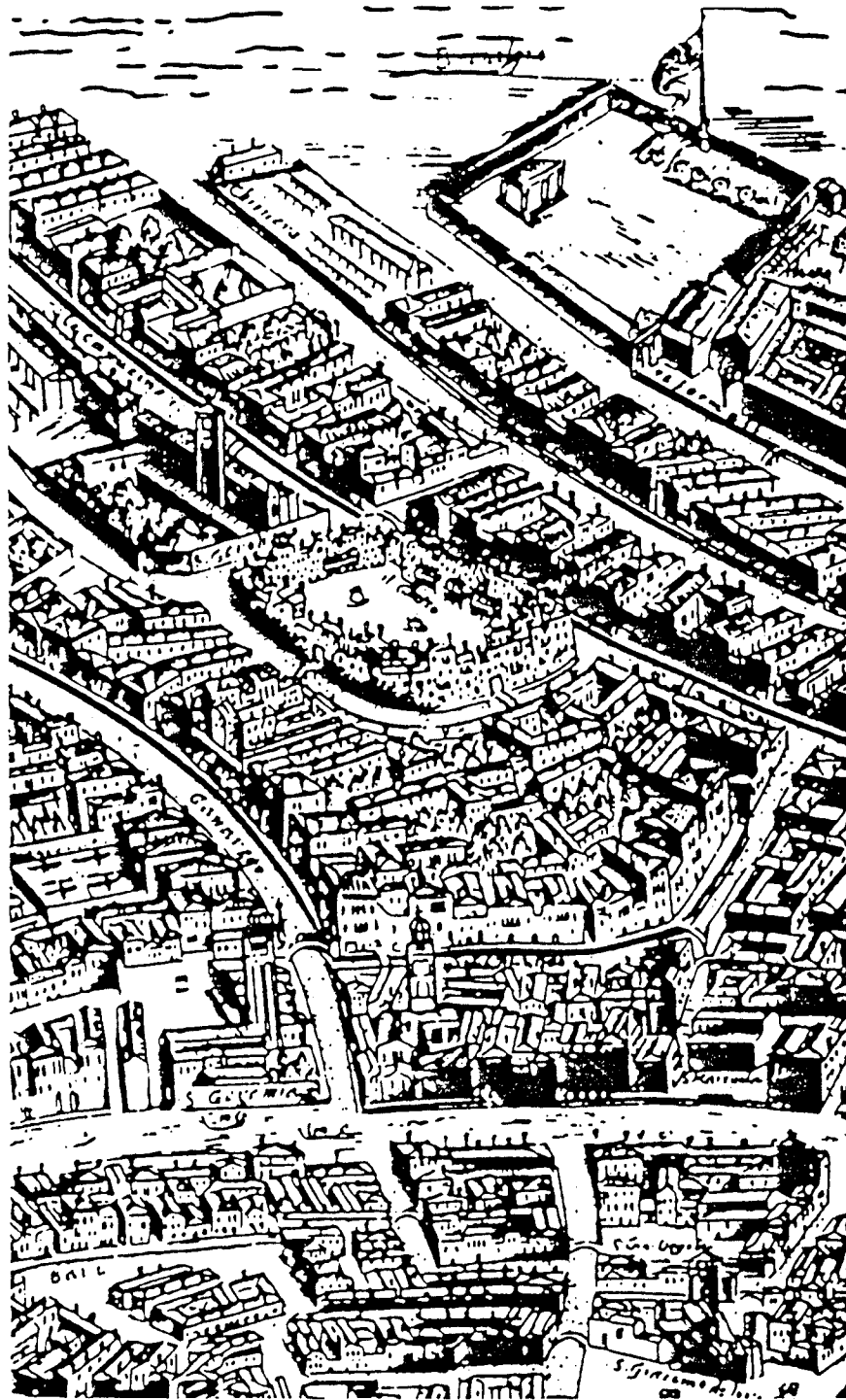


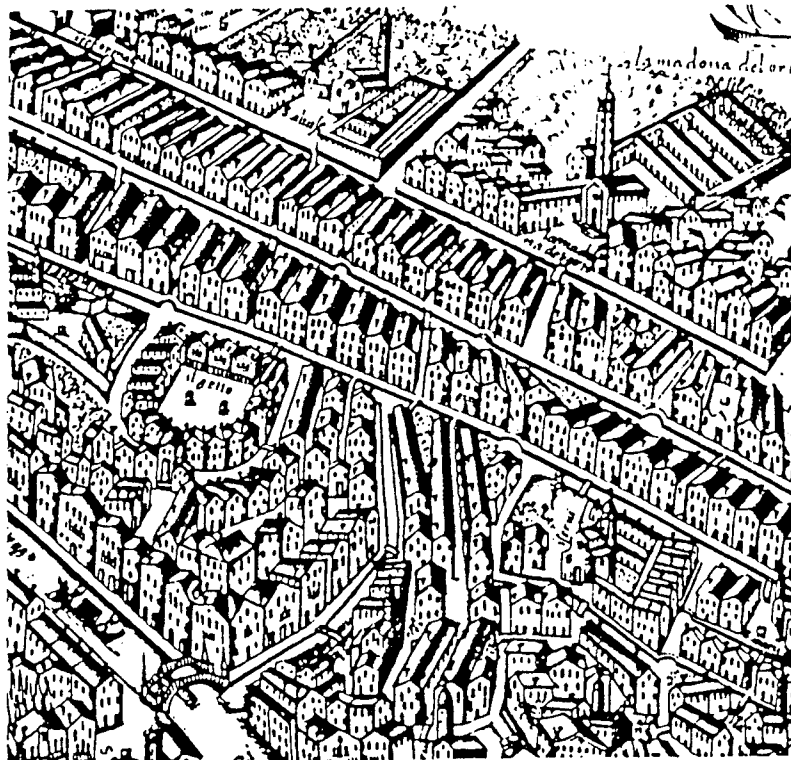
17. The Ghetto Nuovo  
The map of the city of Venice  
by Willem Blaeu, published by A.



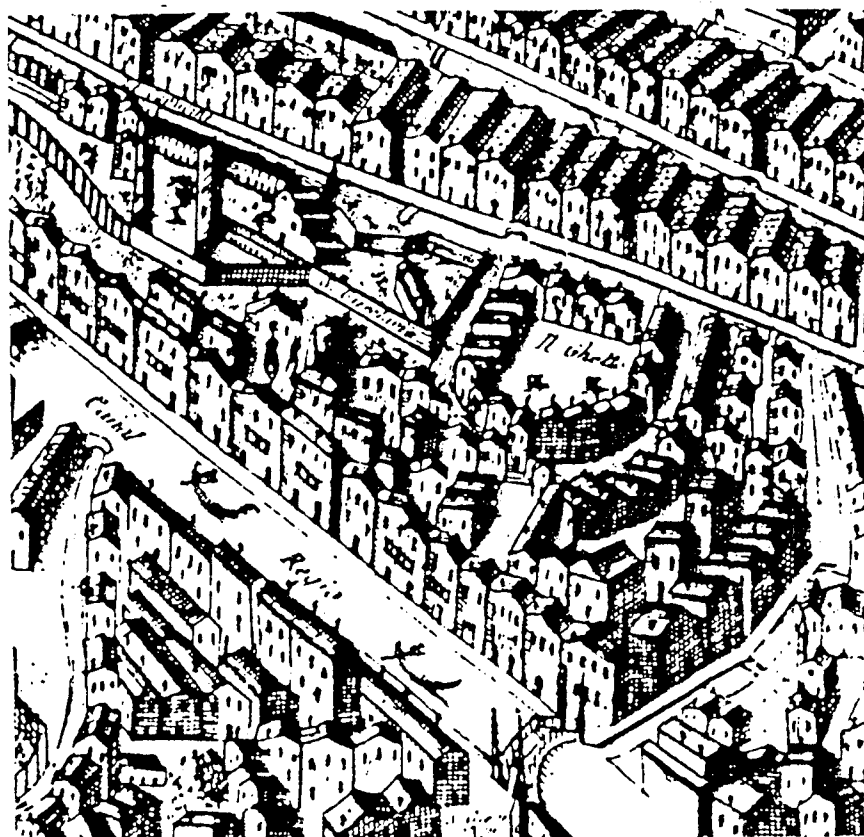
PERSPECTIVE MAP OF VENICE BY  
GIOVANNI MERLO 1696

Venice - Perspective map. Gio. Merlo 1696 (detail)





Venice - The Ghetto on a perspective map published by Stefano Scolaro in 1677

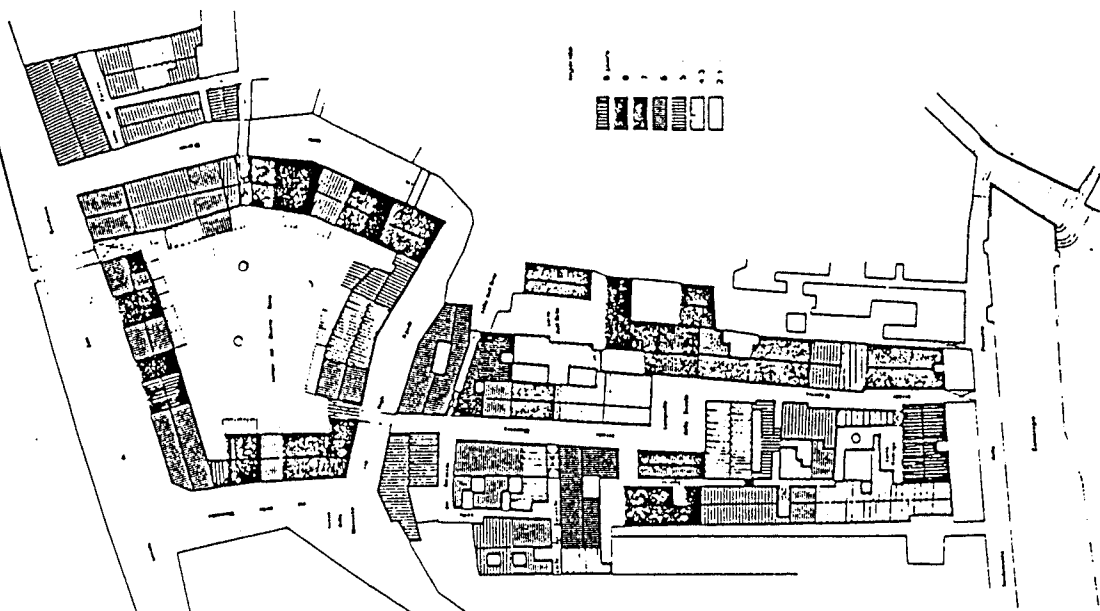


Late 18th C. map of the Venetian Ghetto (private collection)



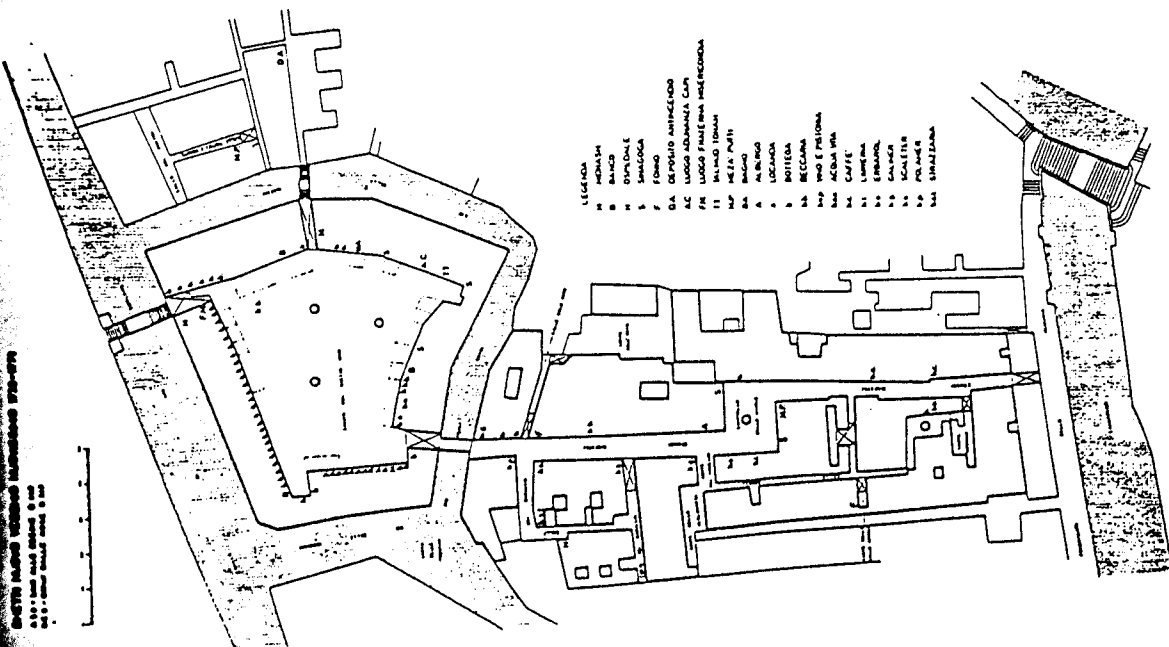


ALTEZZA DEI GHETTI NEL SECOLO XVIII

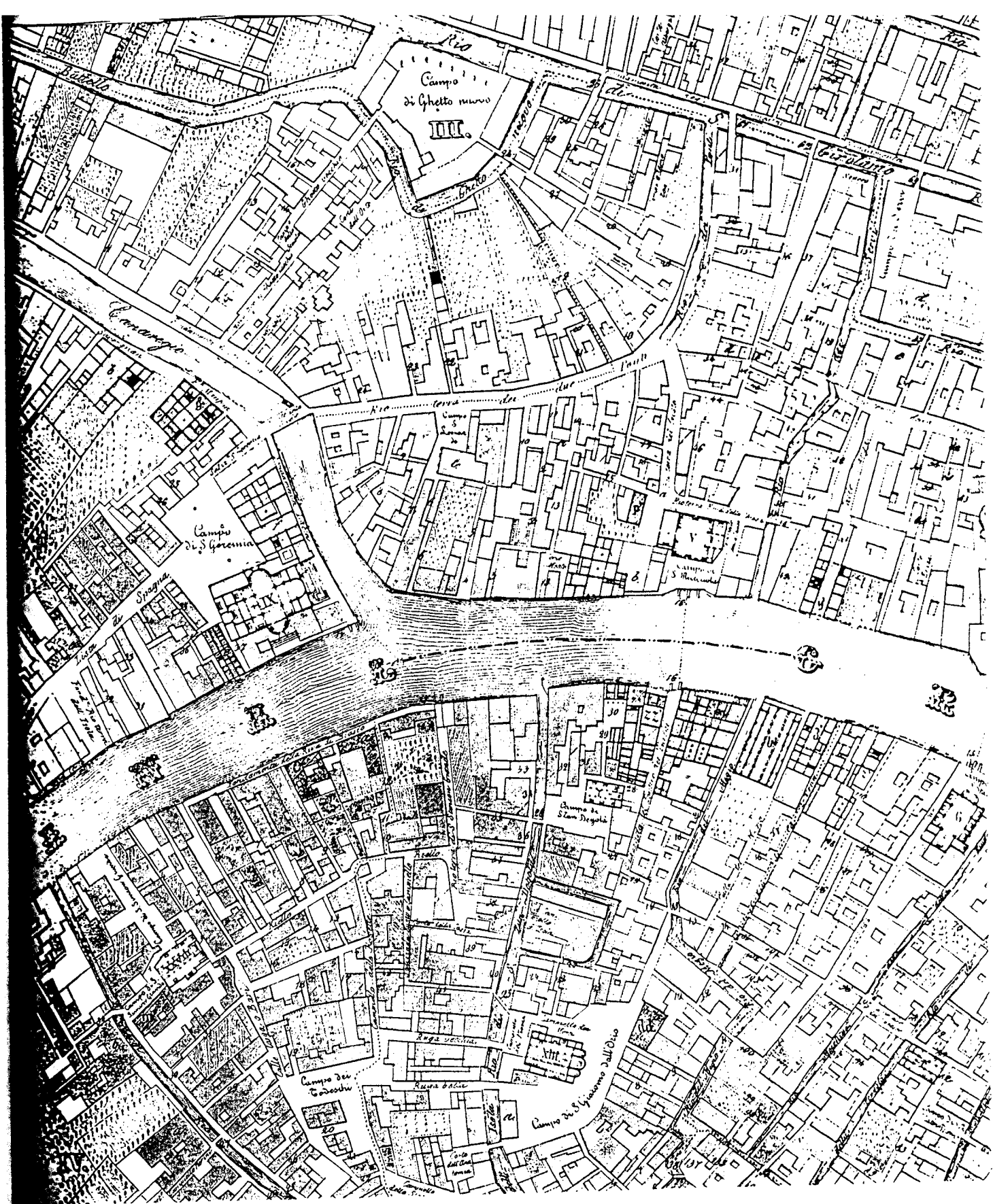


TAV. XV: Altezza degli edifici dei ghetti nel secolo XVIII. Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Savi alle Decime, catastici 1713-1739-1771, busta 433 e busta 440; Museo Civico di Venezia, Donà dalle Rose, busta 347.

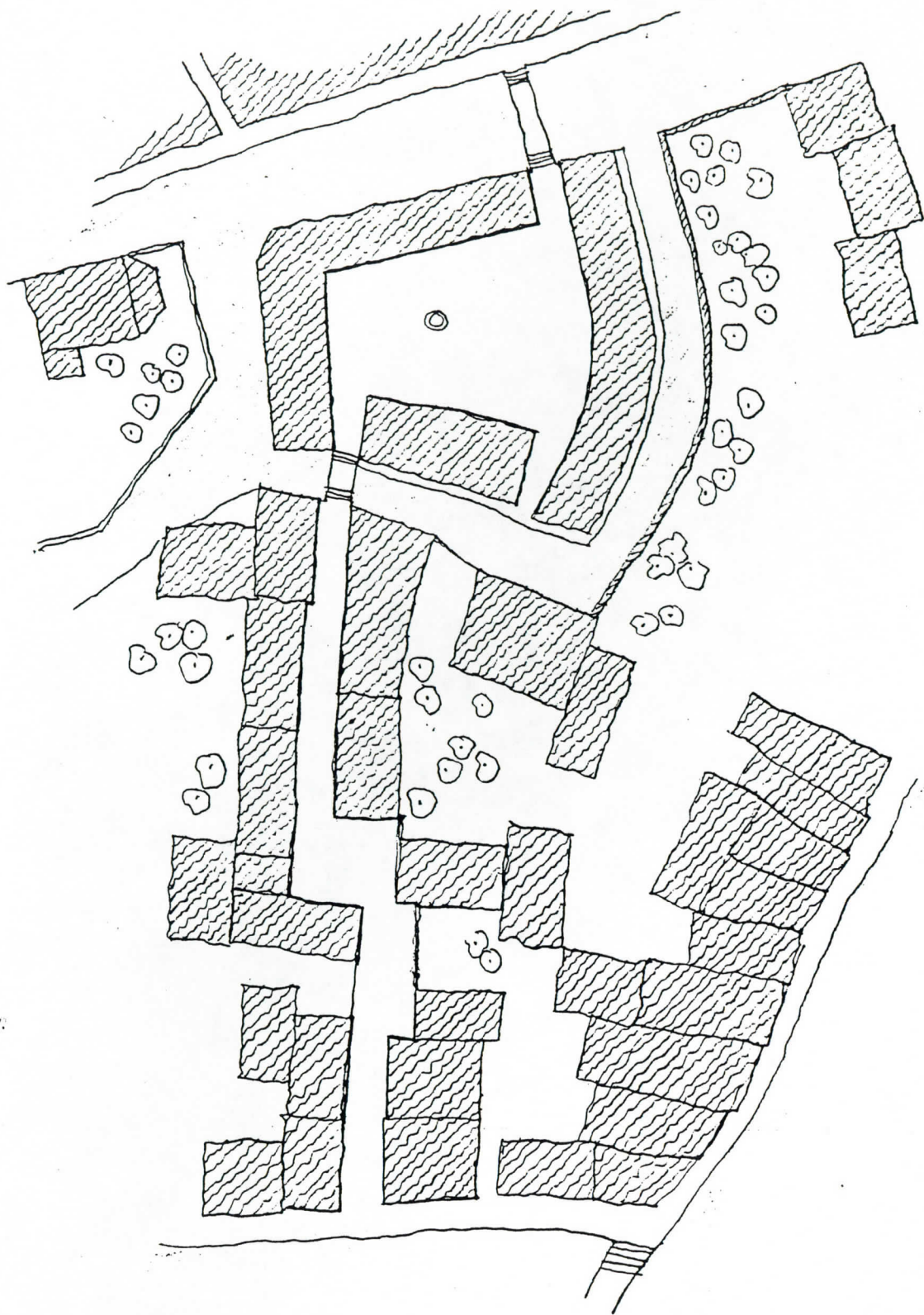
LOCALIZZAZIONE DELLA RETE COMMERCIALE DEI GHETTI NUOVO, VECCHIO, NUOVISSIMO. Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Savi alle Decime, catastico 1739, busta 440.



TAV. XIV: Localizzazione della rete commerciale dei ghetti Nuovo, Vecchio, Nuovissimo. Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Savi alle Decime, catastico 1739, busta 440.

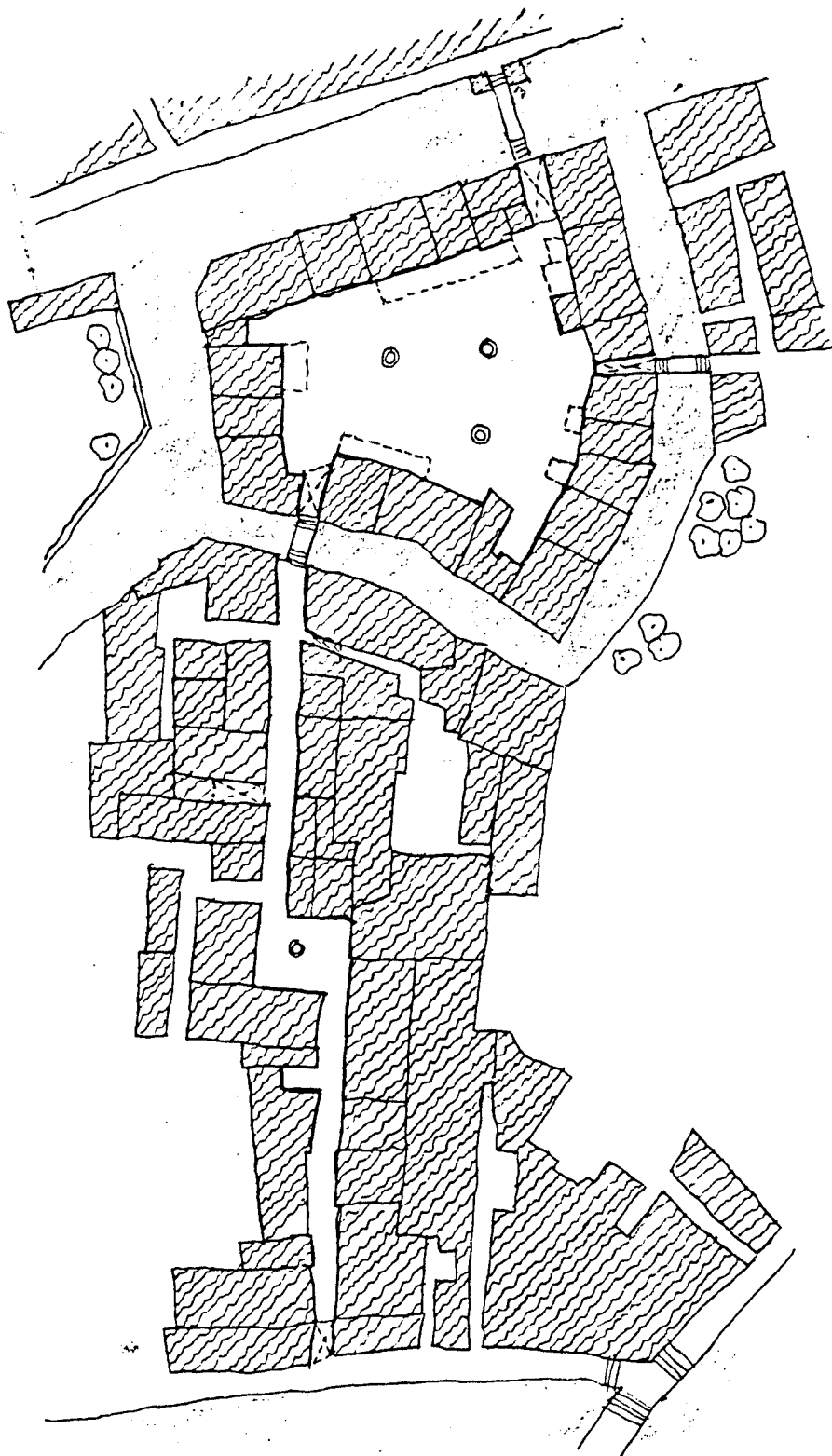


COMBATI MAP. 1340



PRE-GHETTO CONDITIONS  
1300  
(FROM BARBAR)

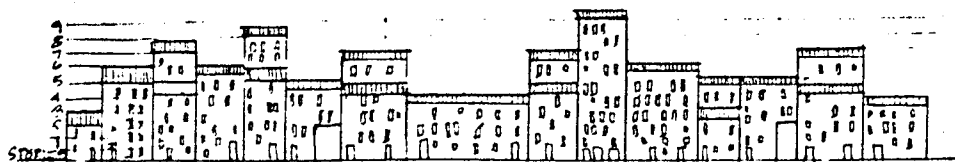




THREE WORKING GHETTOS

1713

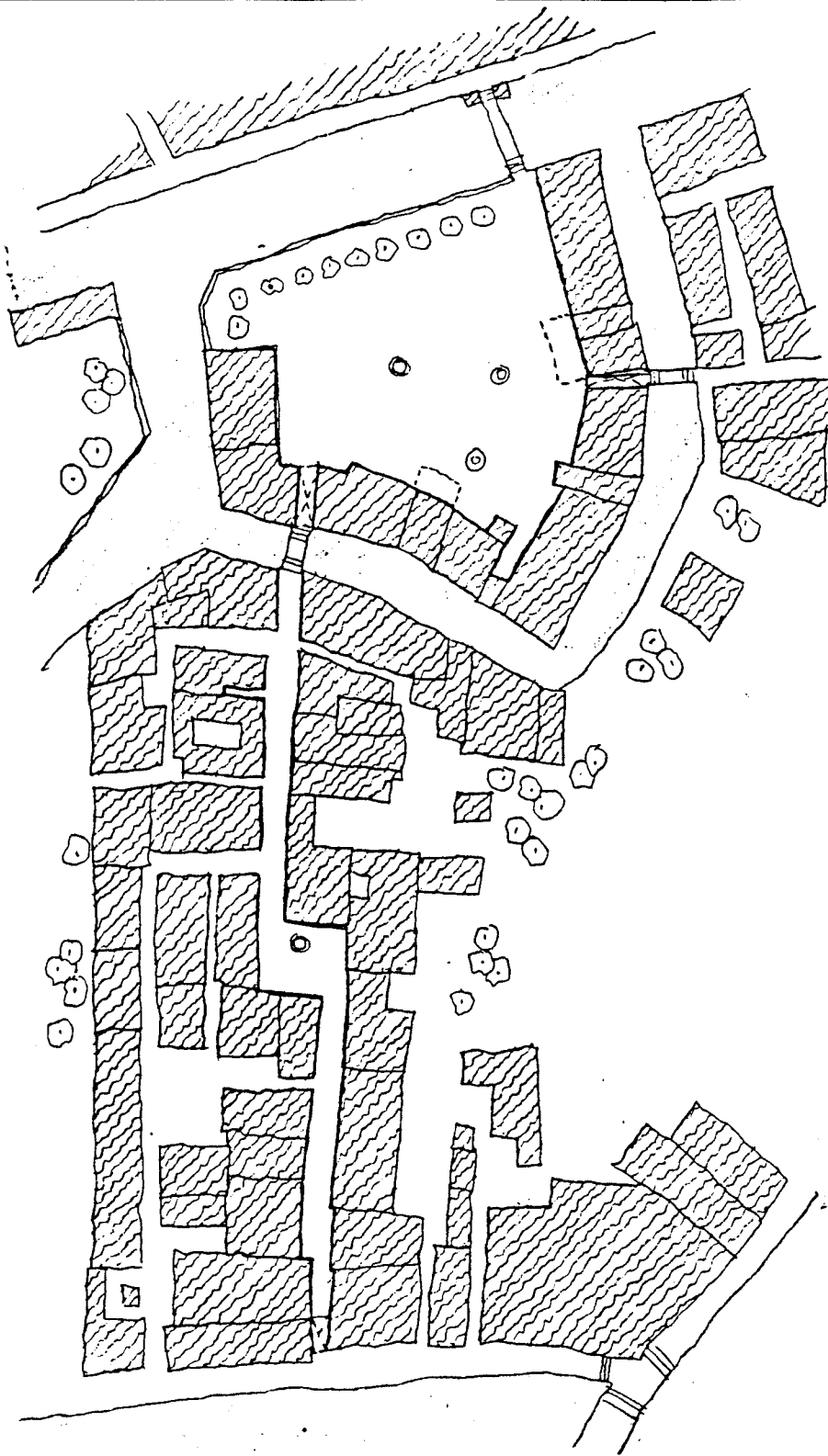
(FROM ARCHIVES OF VENECE)



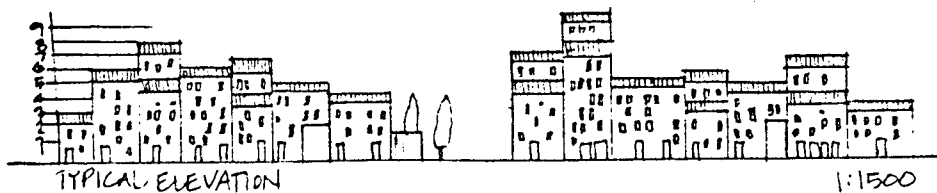
TYPICAL ELEVATION

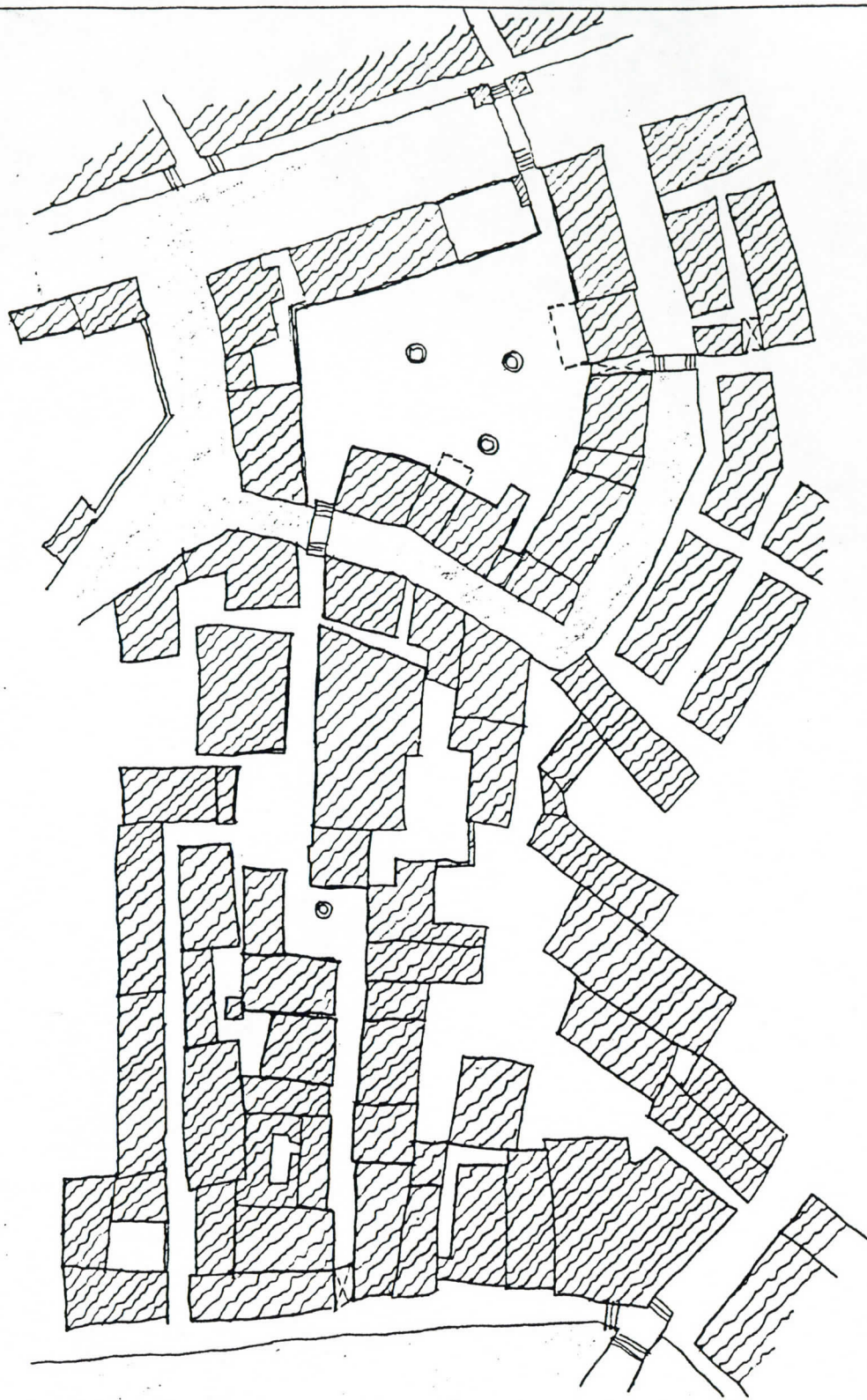
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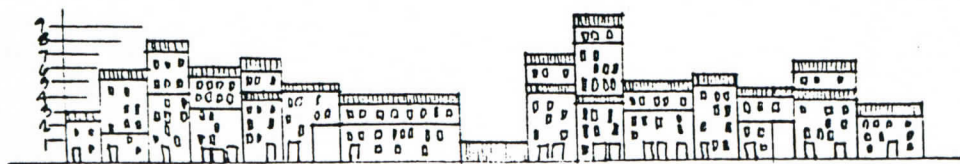


POST GHETTO CONDITIONS  
1946  
(FROM COMBAT)





CURRENT CONDITIONS  
1991



TYPICAL ELEVATION

1:1500

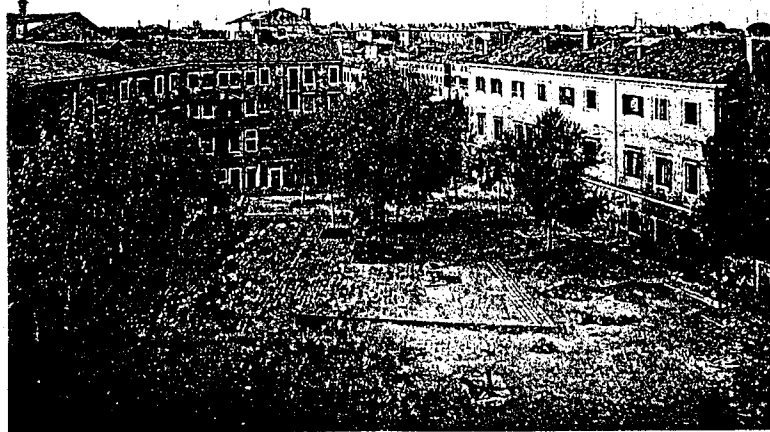


'PONTE DE GHETO NOVO  
(LOOKING TOWARDS RIO  
'S. GIROLAMO)

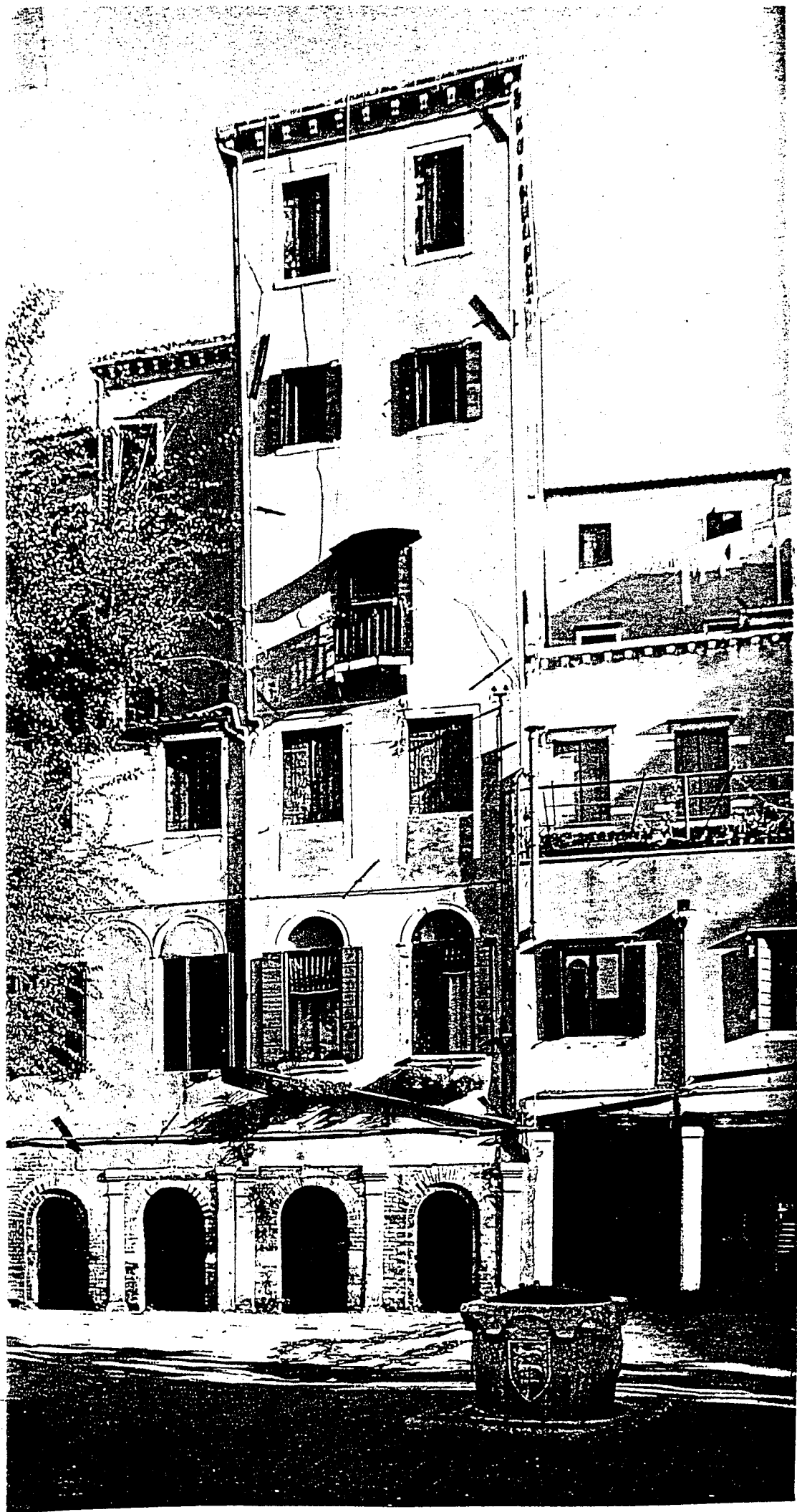


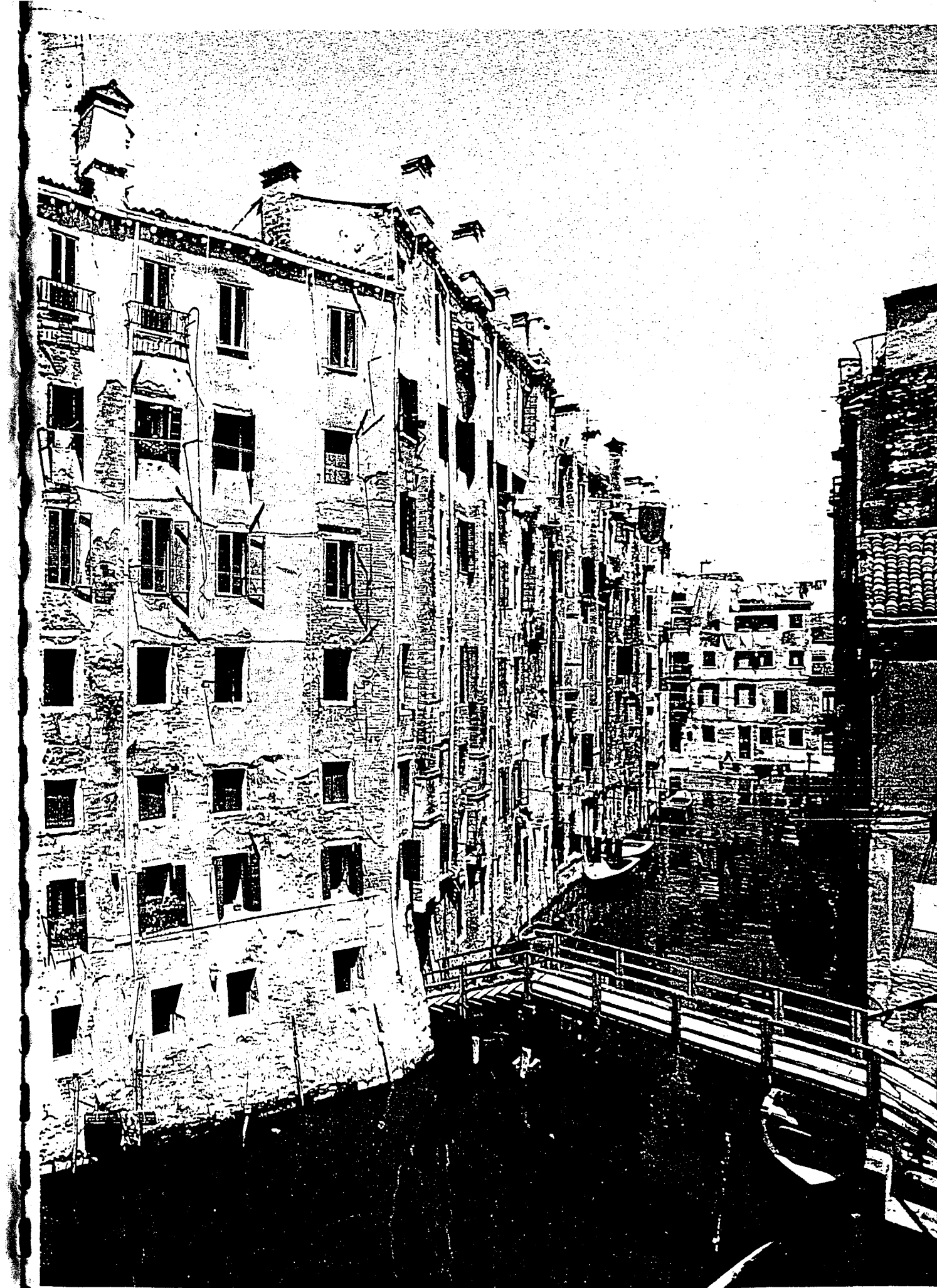


CAMPO della SCUOLA  
GHETTO VECCHIO

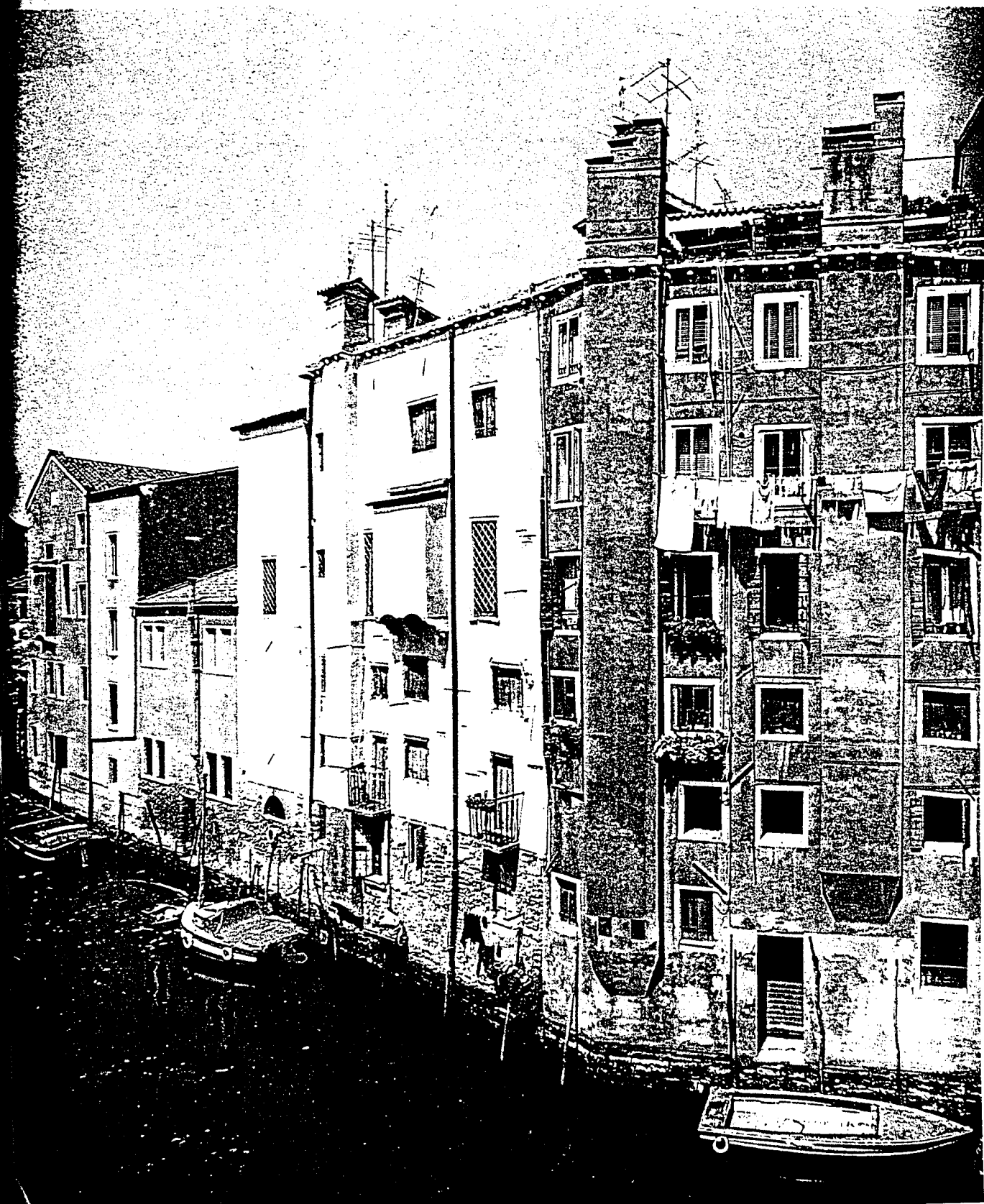


GHETO NOVO  
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION  
PORCH OF SINAGOGA ITALIANA



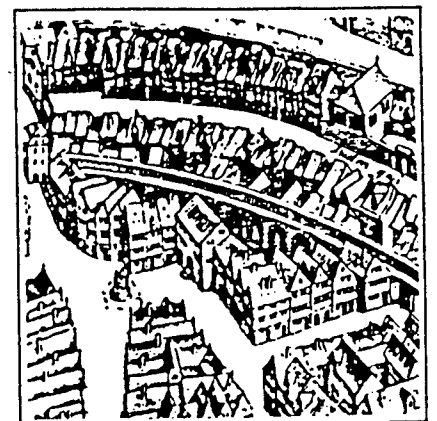


REAR ELEVATION - GHETO NOVO  
(PONTIC DE GHETO NOVRSSIMO)



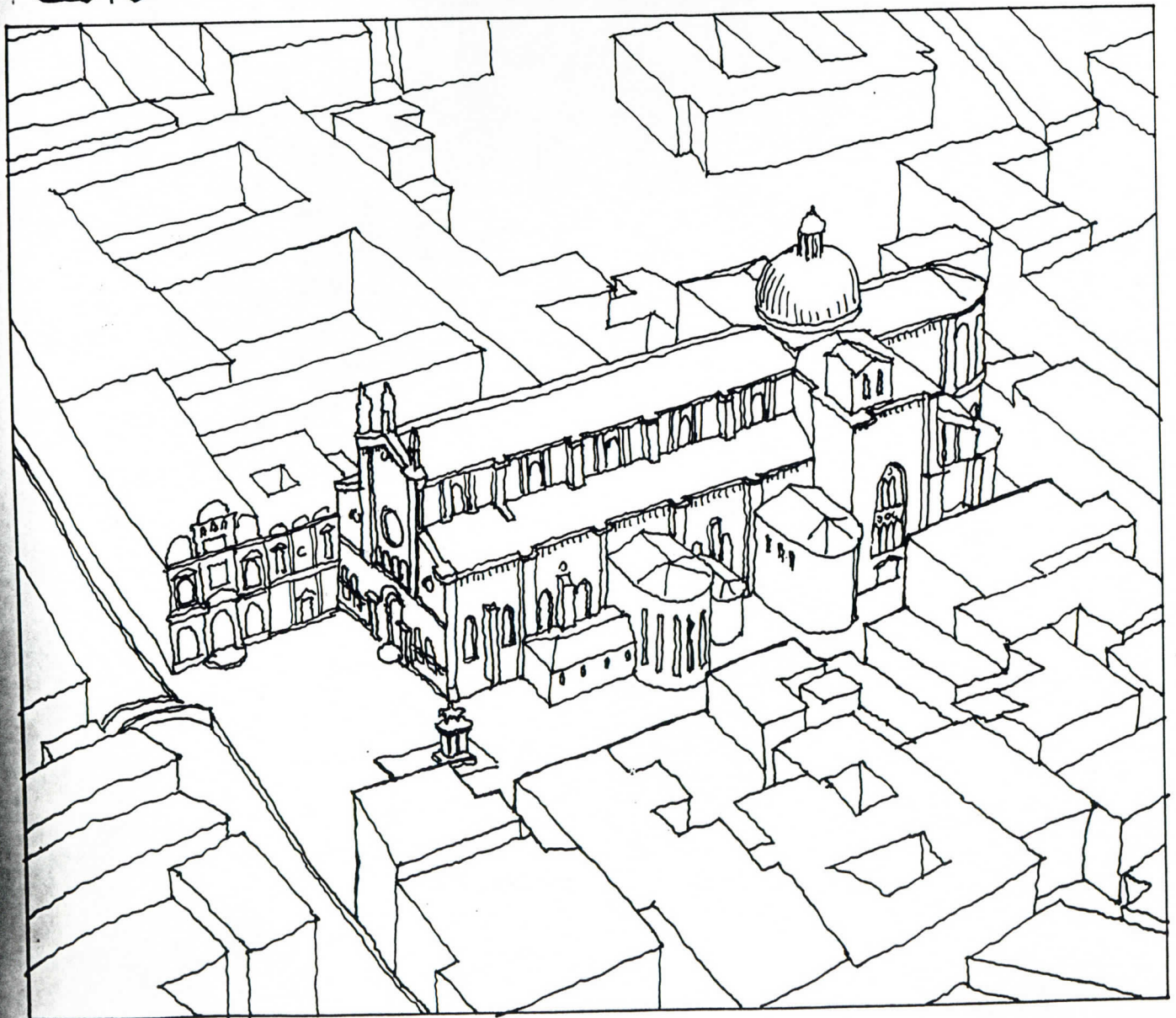
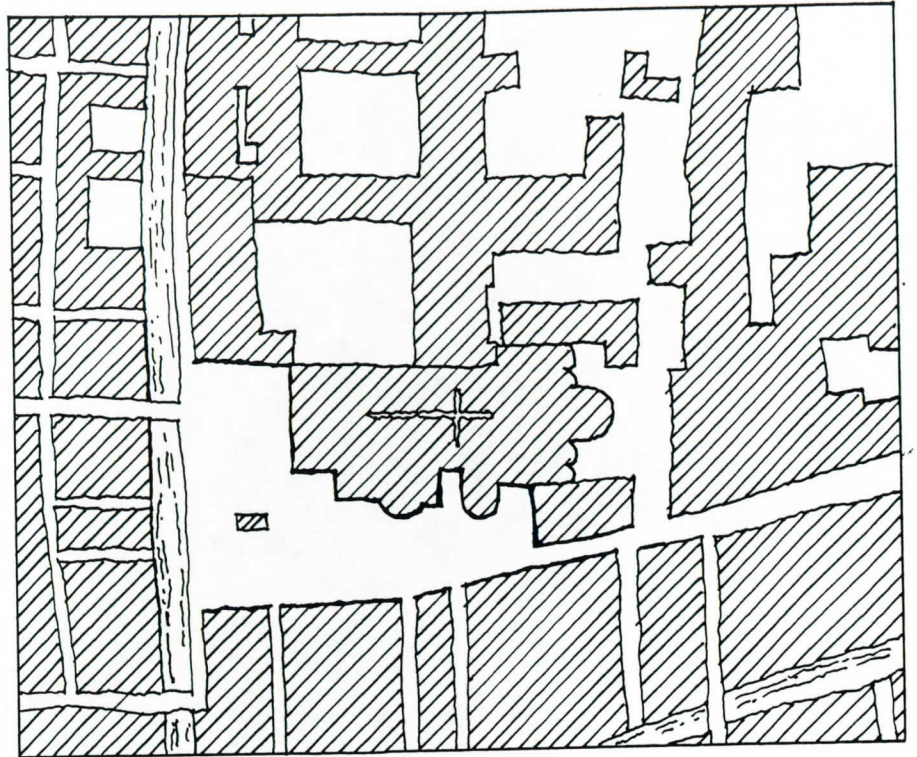
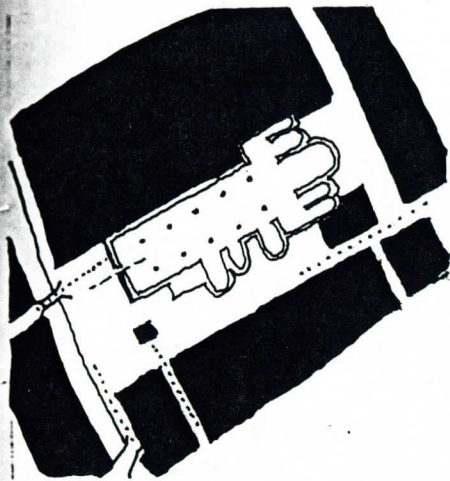
REAR ELEVATION  
GHETTO NOVO  
(CENTER - SINAGOGA TEDESCA)

# ANALYSIS

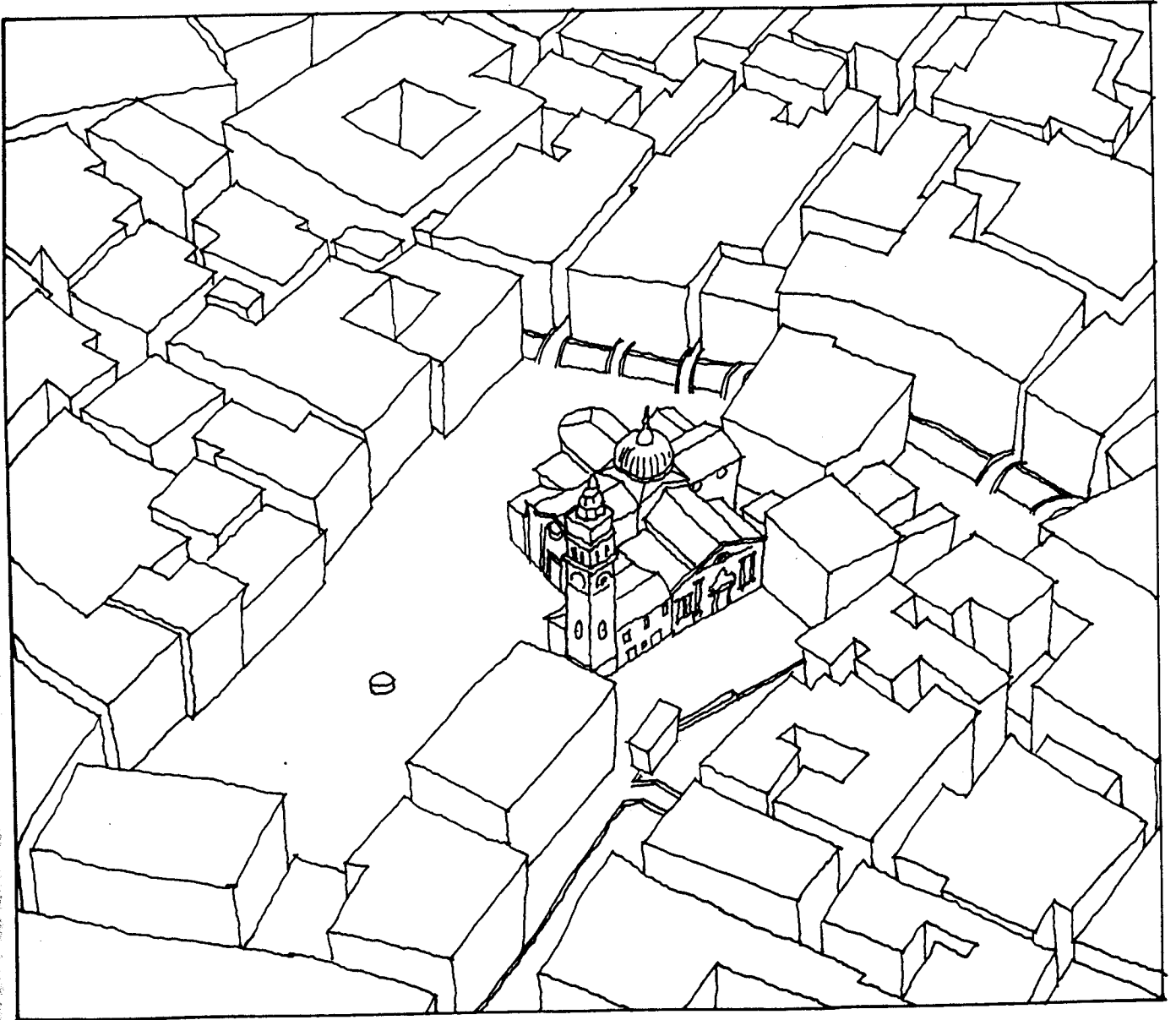
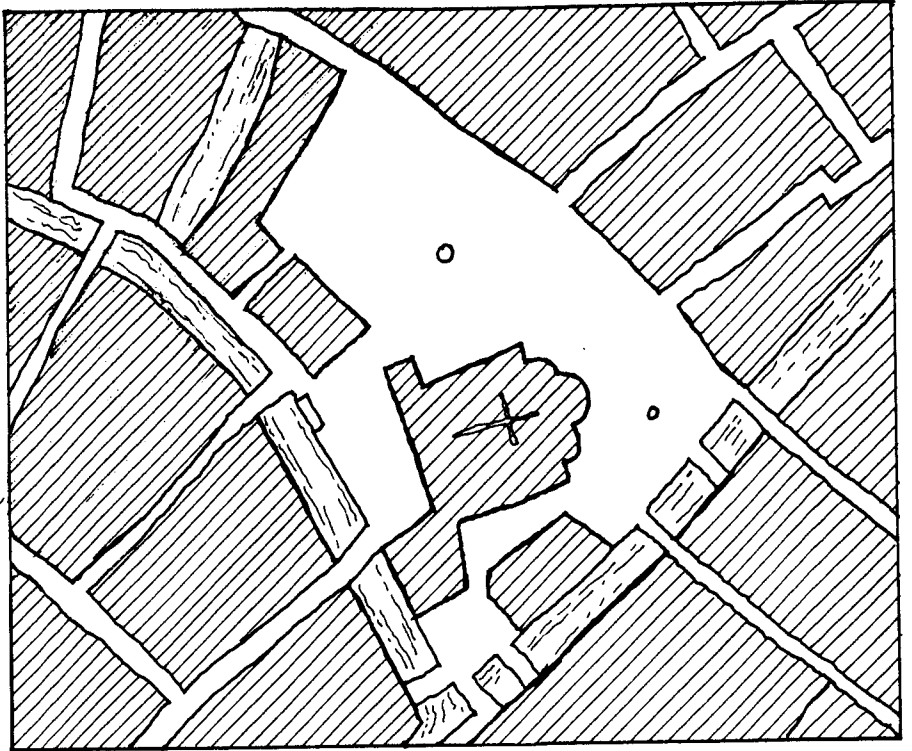
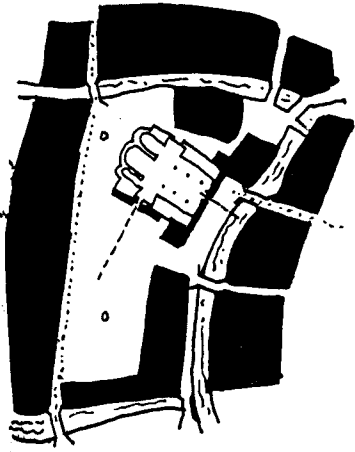




CAMPO DI SANTI  
GIOVANNI E PAOLO

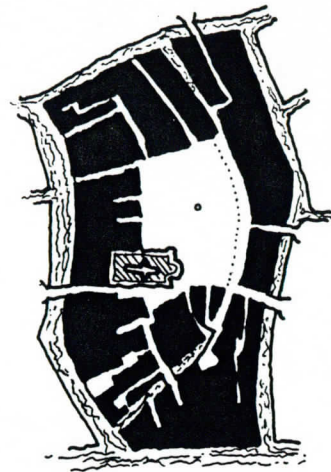
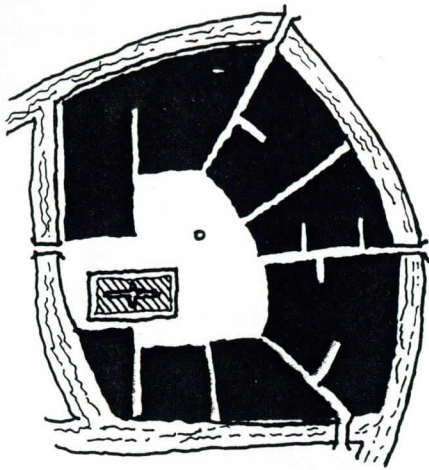


CAMPO DI  
SANTA MARIA FORMOSA

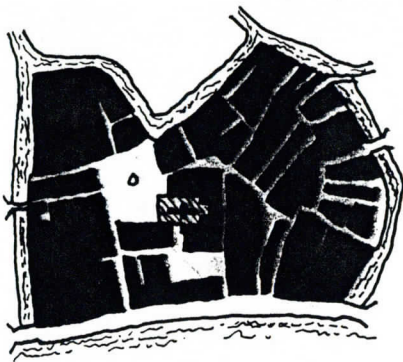




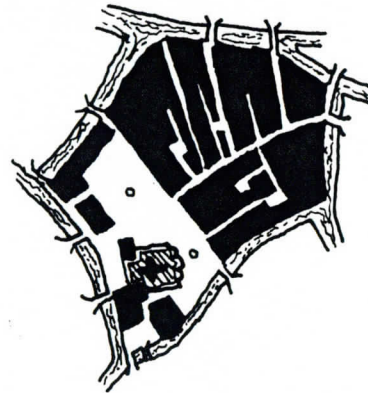
# ISLAND CAMPI COMPARISON



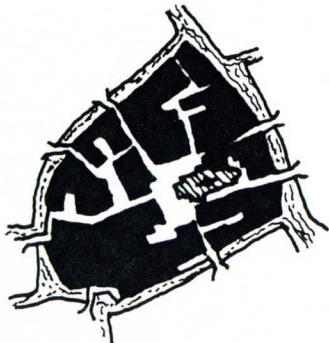
S. POLO



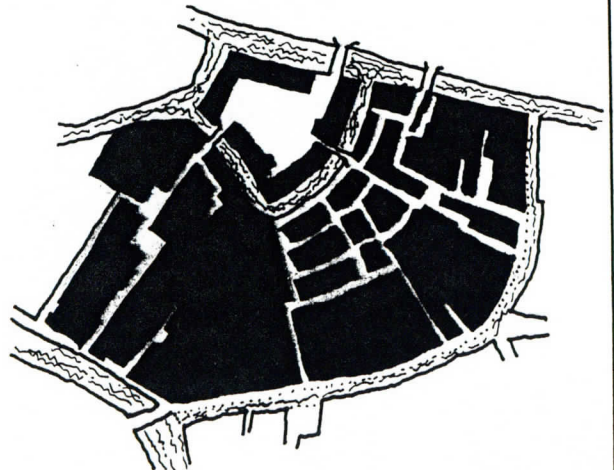
S. GIOVANNI IN BRAGORA



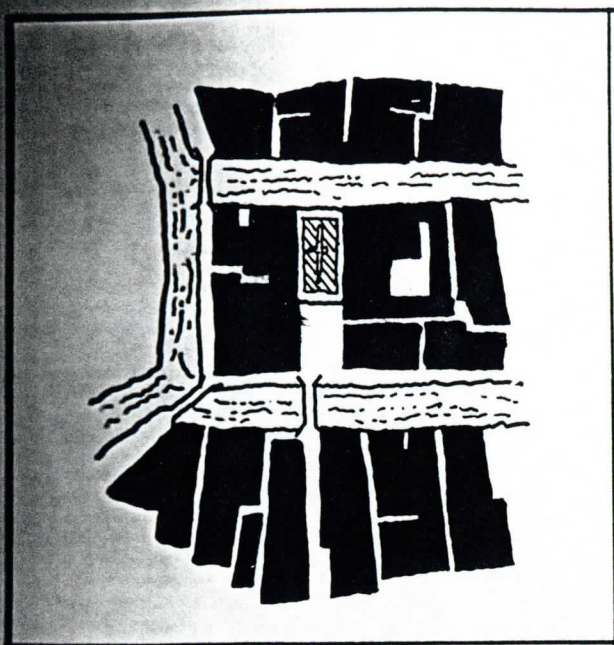
S. M. FORMOSA



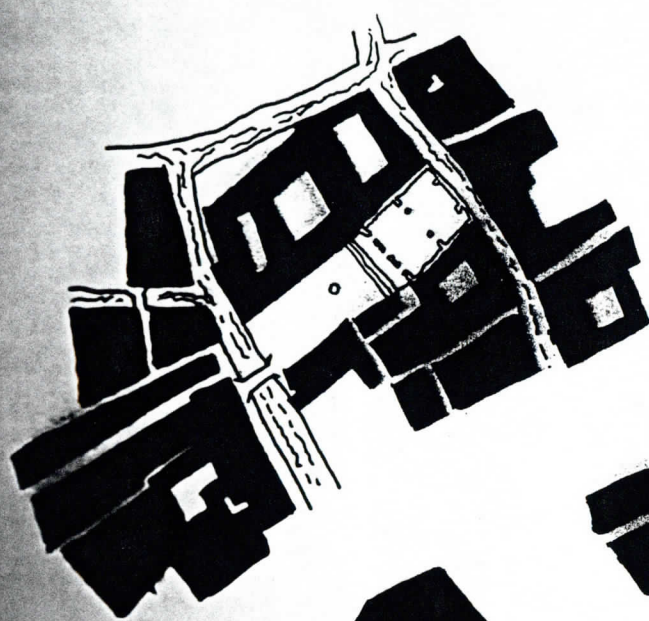
S. FANTIN



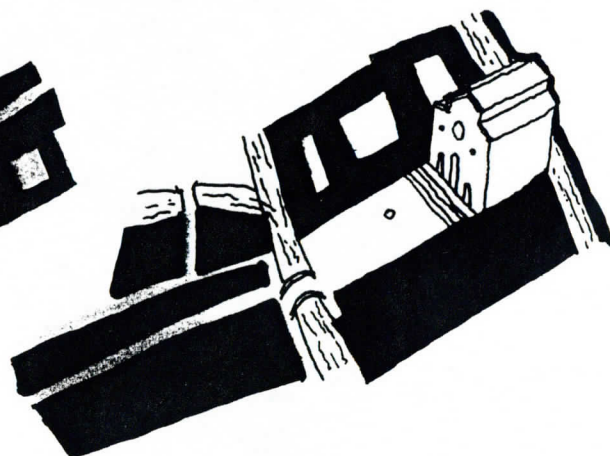
GHETTO NUOVO



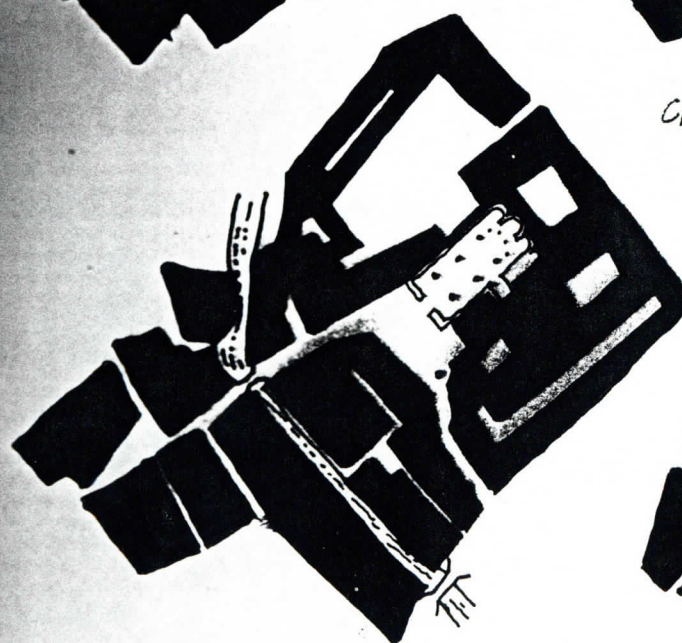
CAMP with IMPACTED INSTITUTION



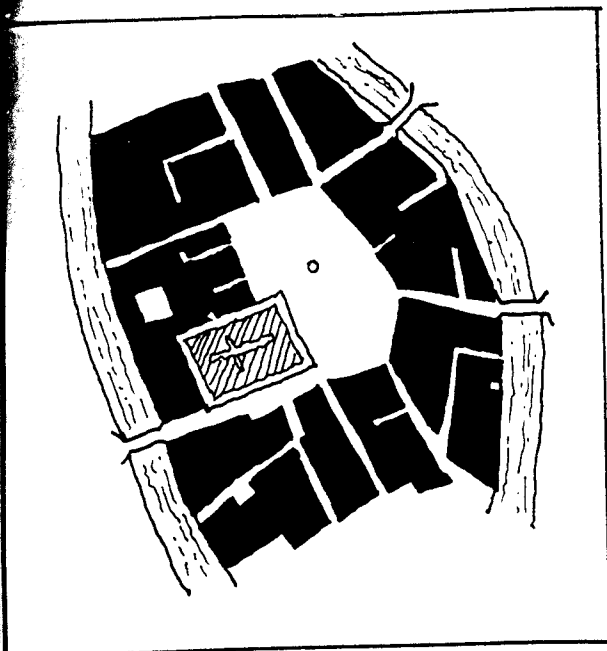
CAMP S. LORENZO



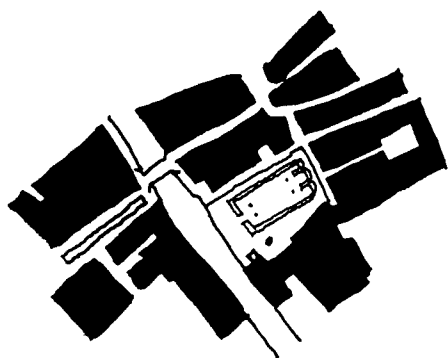
CAMP S. ZACCARIA



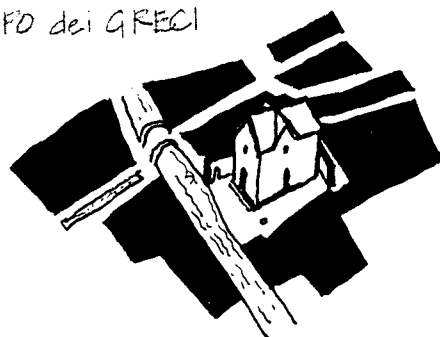




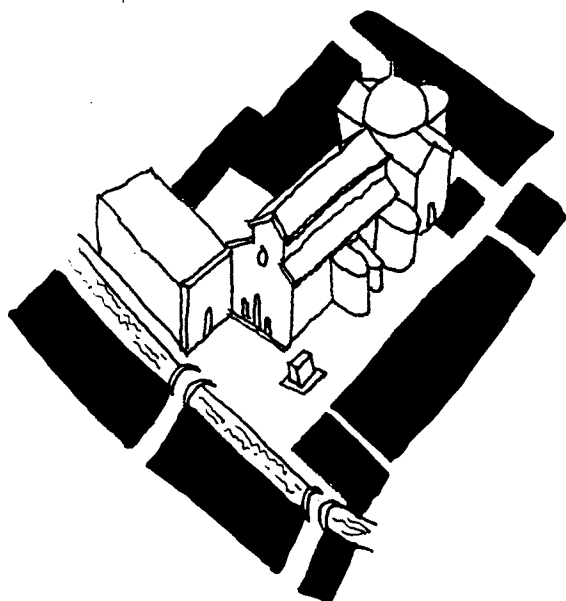
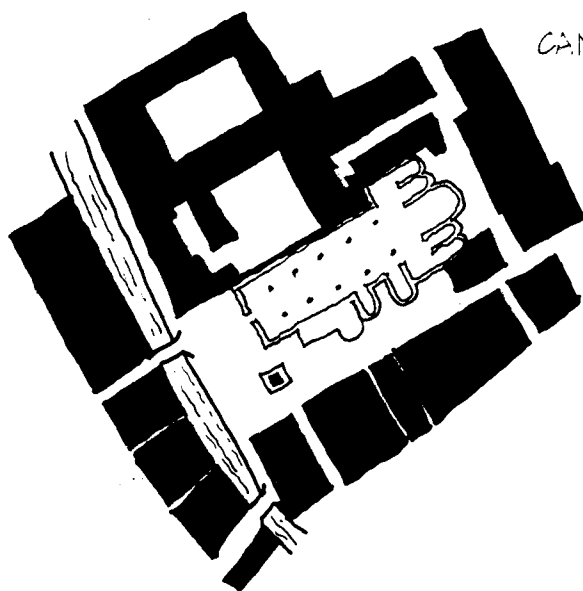
CAMP WITH PARTIALLY IMPACTED INSTITUTIONS

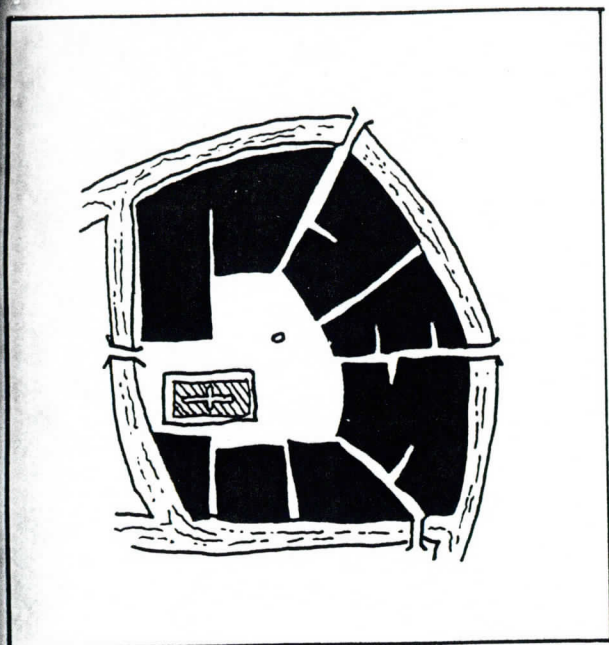


CAMPO dei GRECI

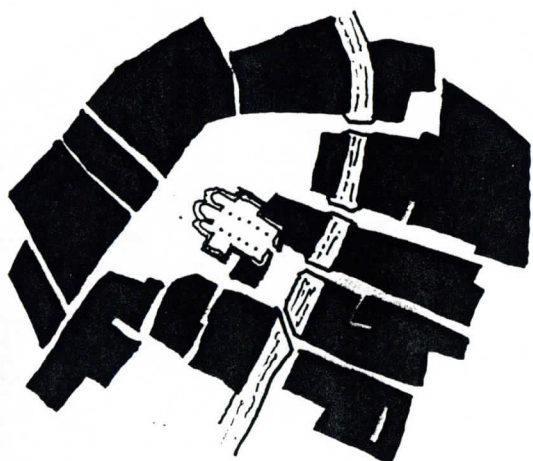


CAMPO di S. GIOVANNI e PAOLO

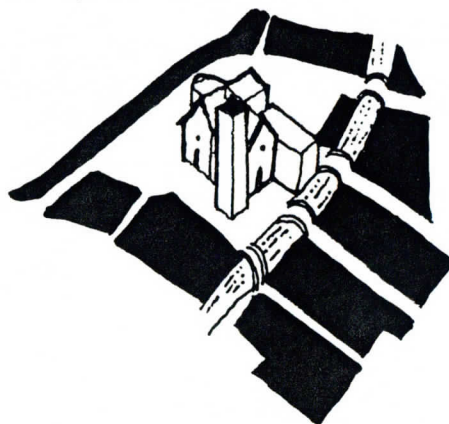




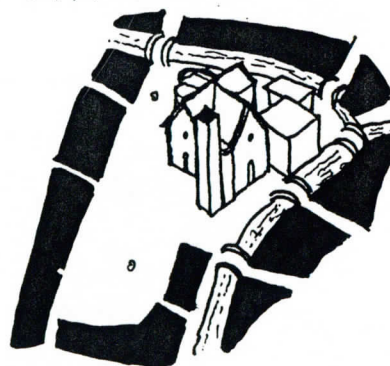
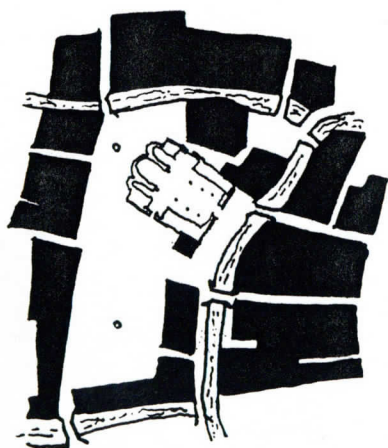
CAMP with OBJECTIFIED INSTITUTIONS

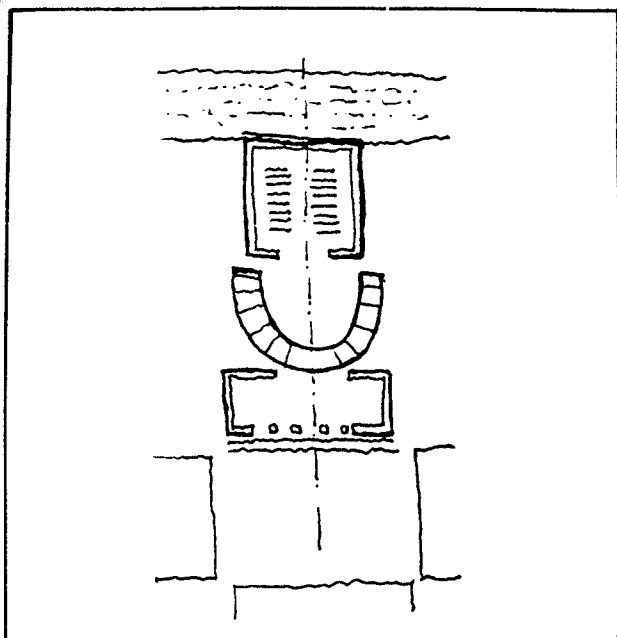


CAMPO di S. GIACOMO dall'ORLO

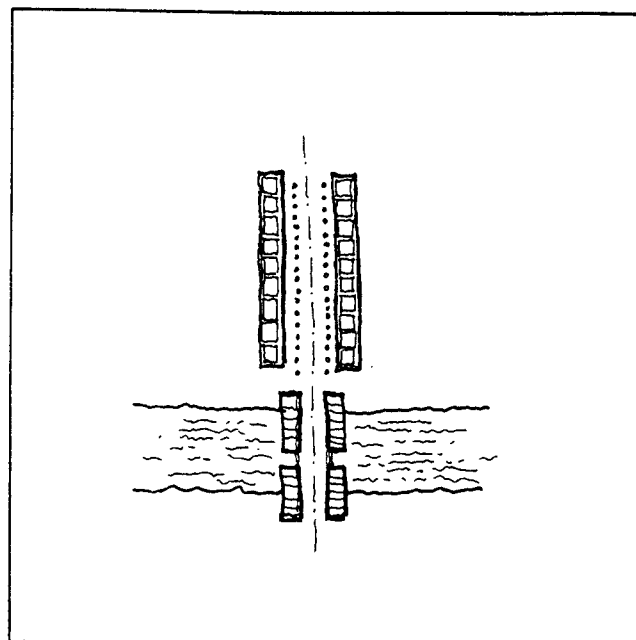


CAMPO S. M. FORMOSA

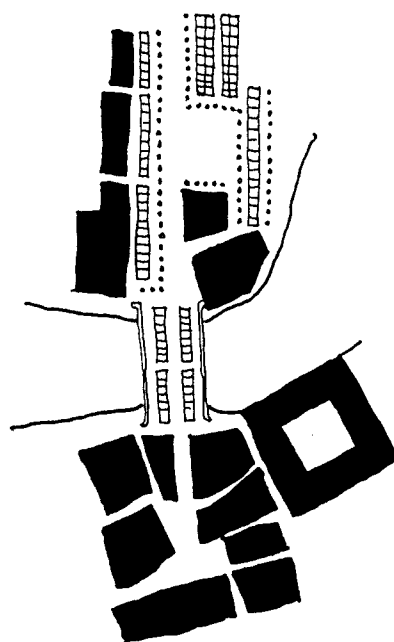
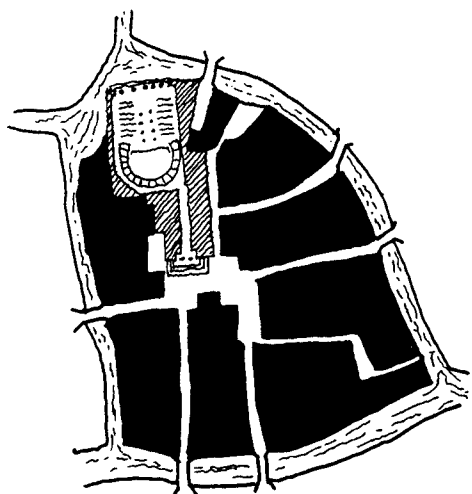




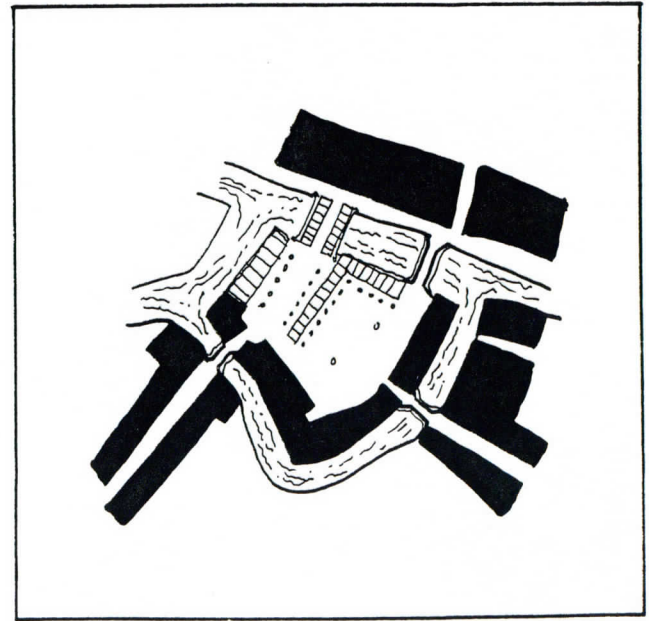
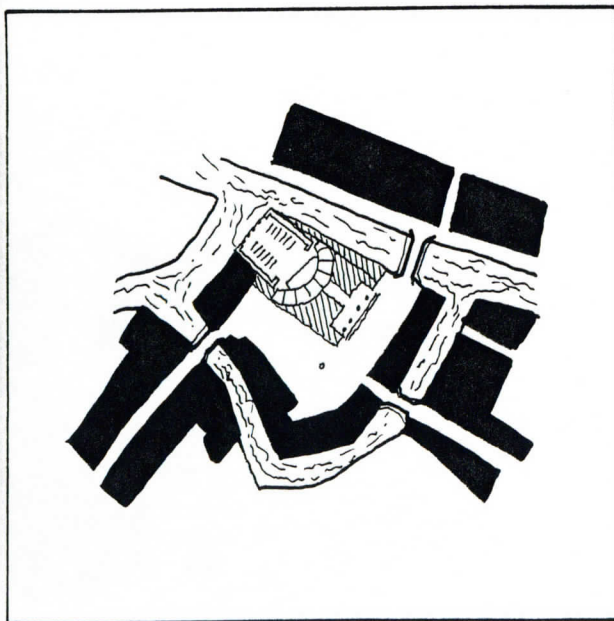
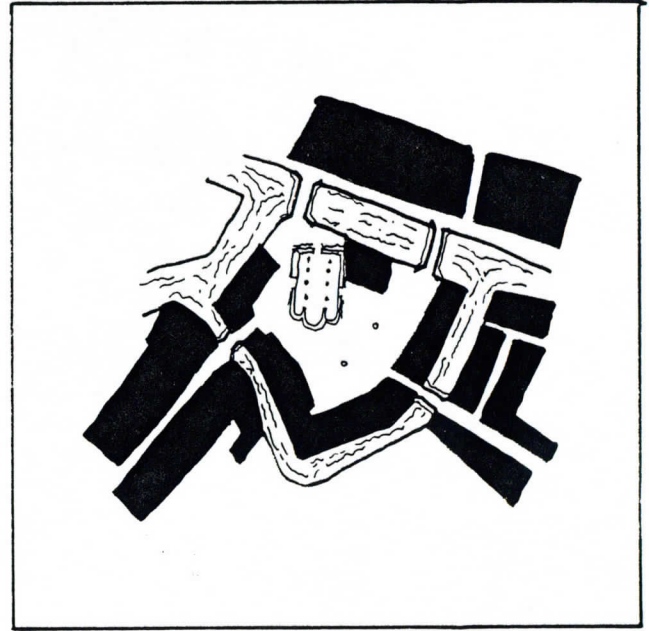
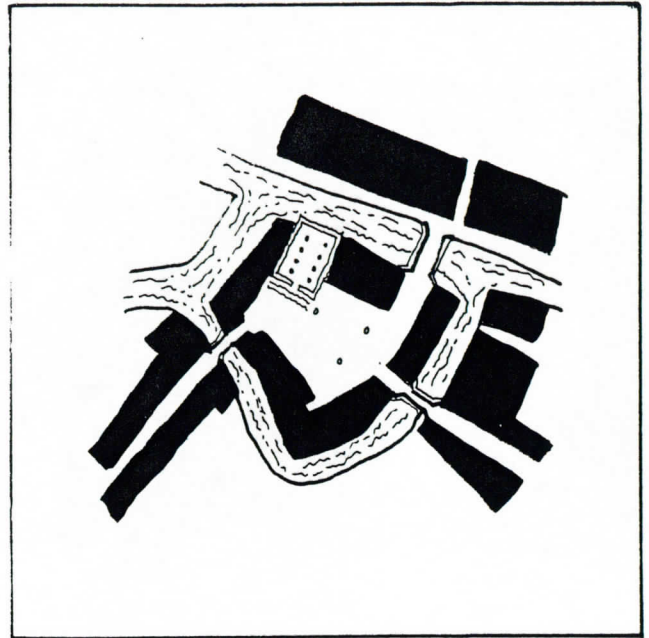
TEATRO di VENEZIA



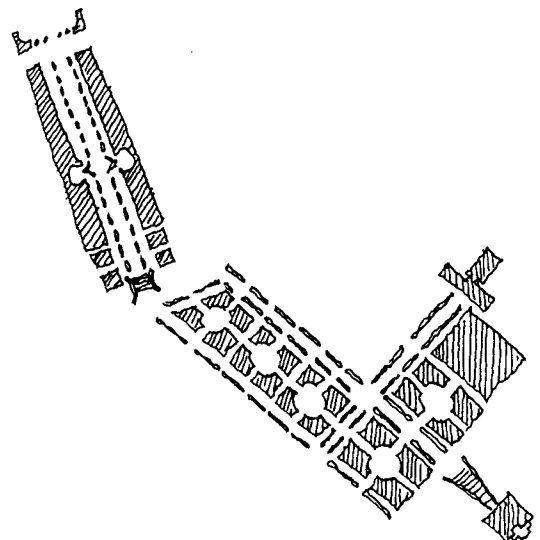
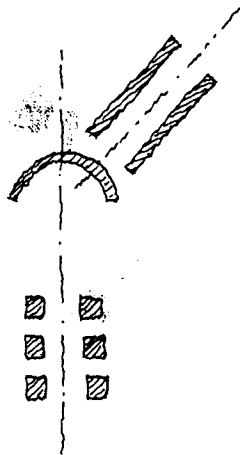
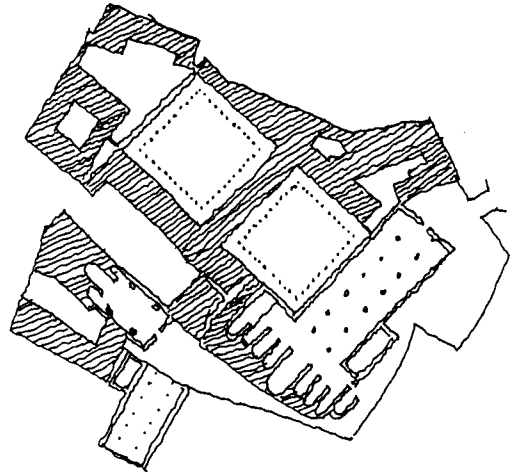
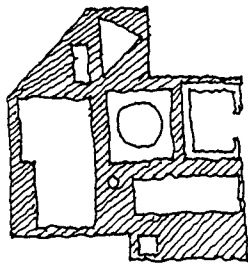
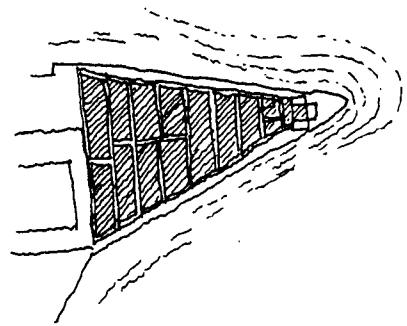
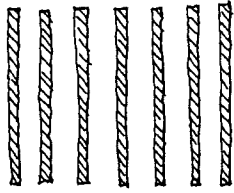
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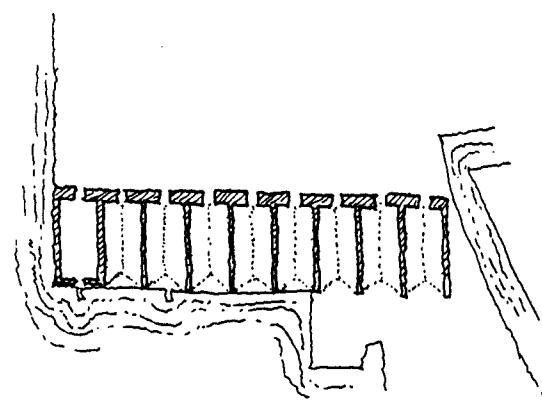
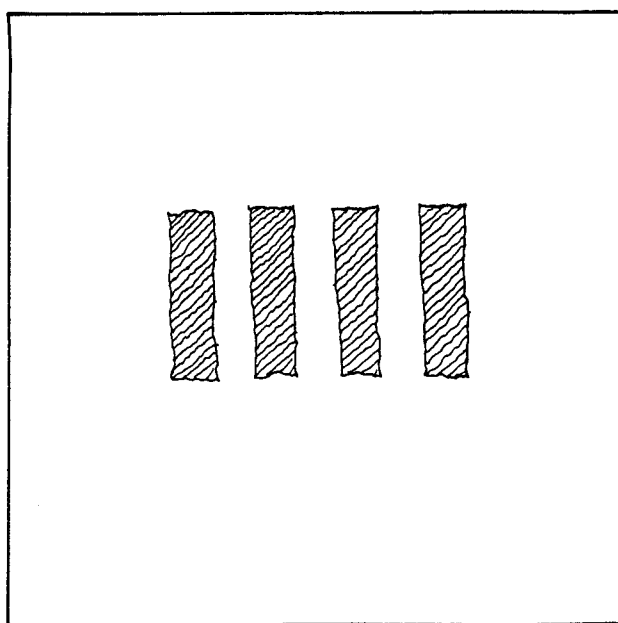
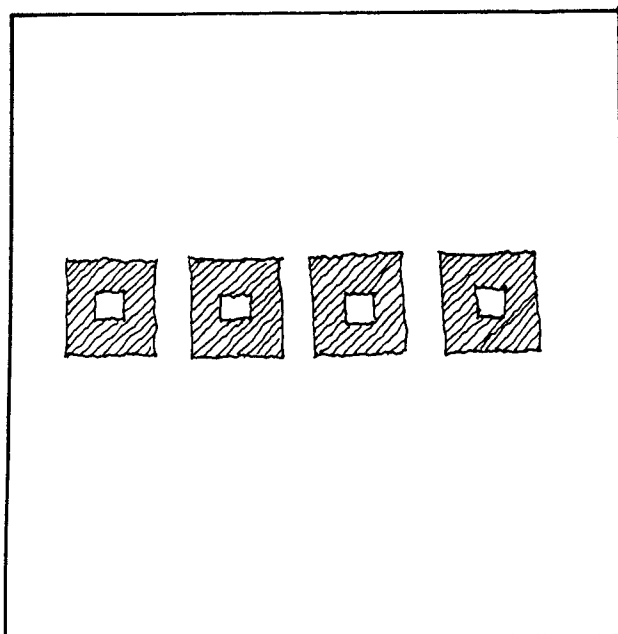
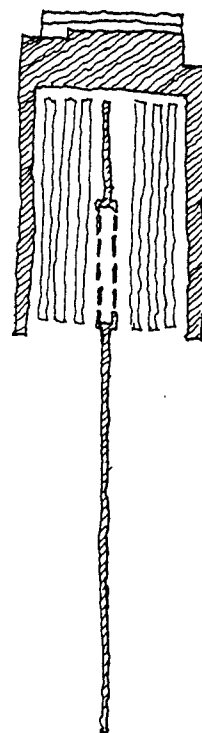
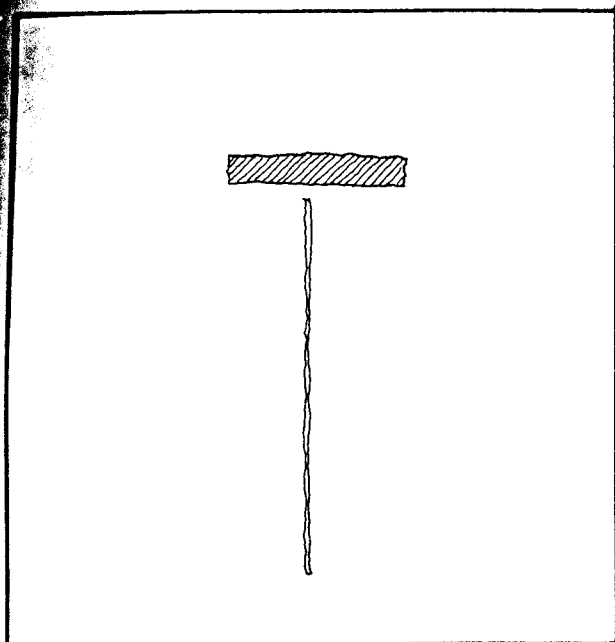


HYPOTHETICAL GHETTO CAMPI



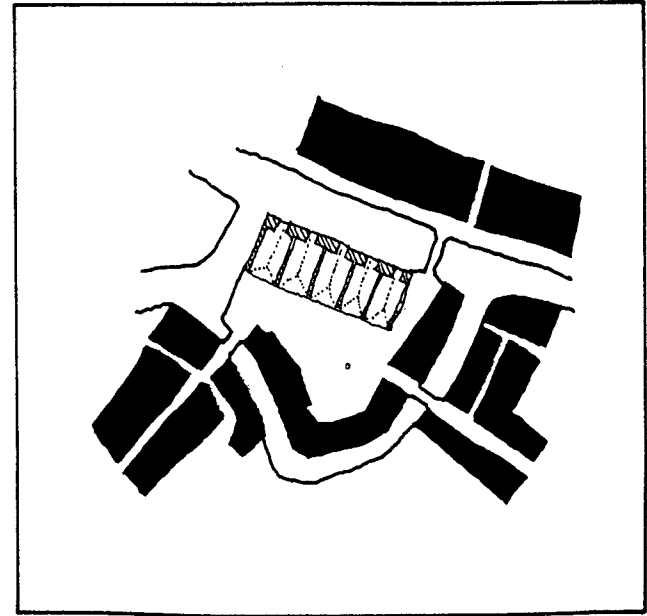
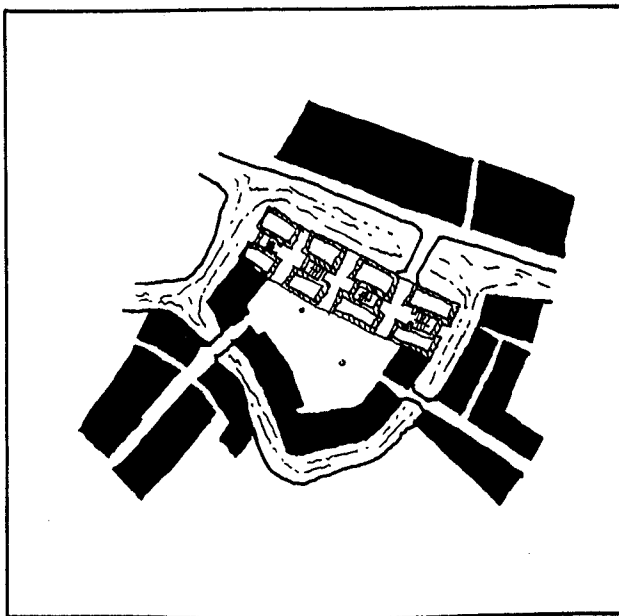
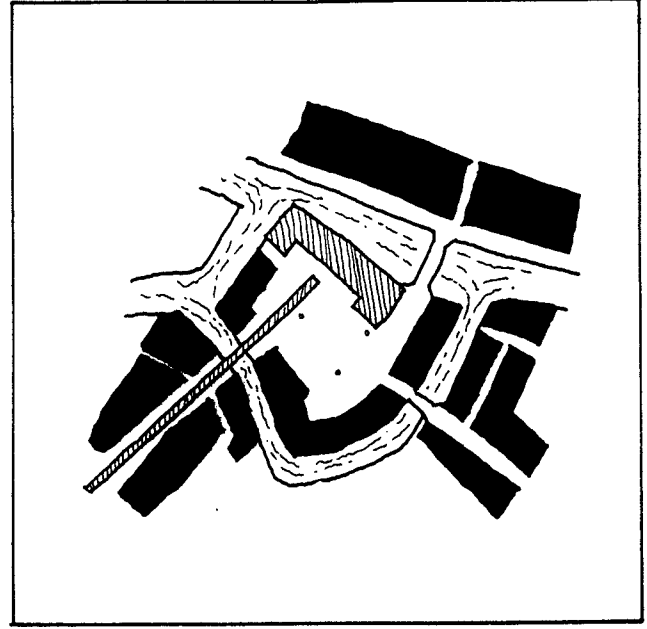
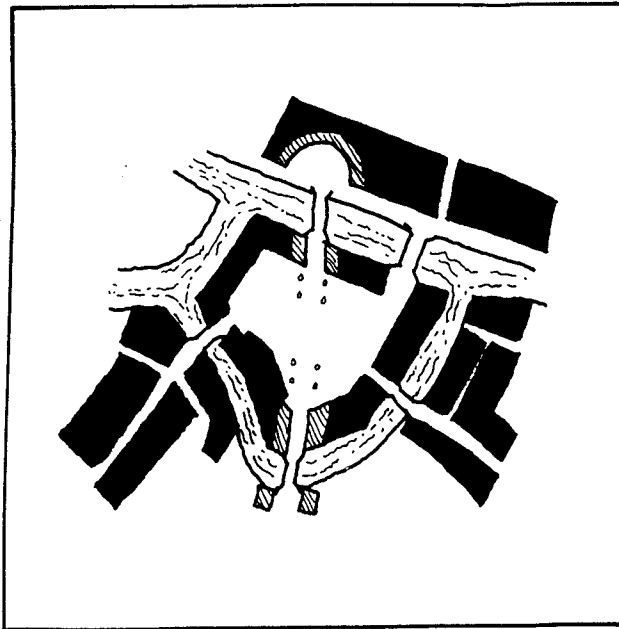
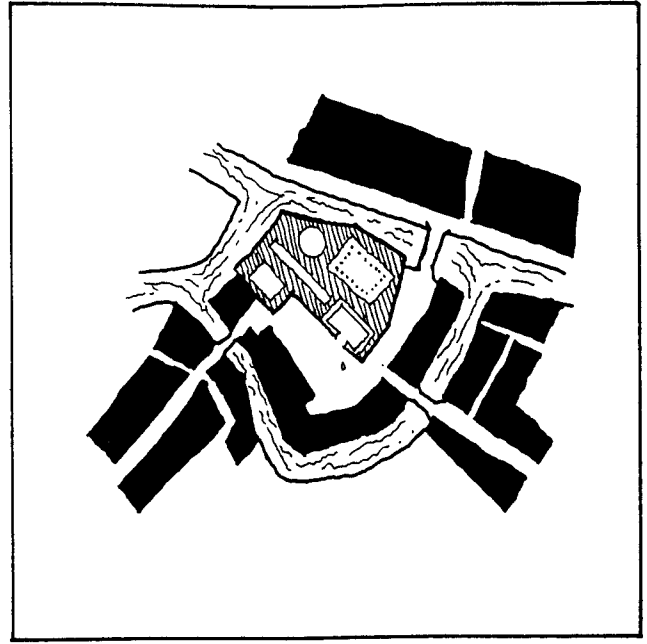
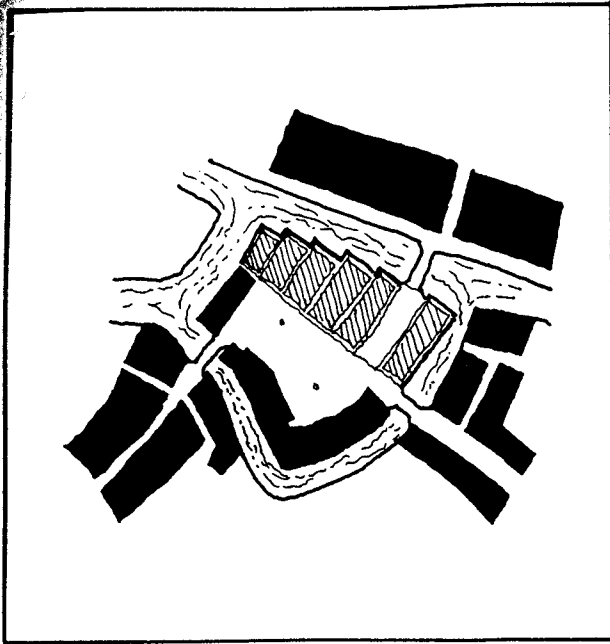
# URBAN STRUCTURES







HYPOTHETICAL GHETTO CAMPI



SYNAGOGUES



## The synagogue (from synagogues of Europe, Carol Frinsky)

- A building with a threefold purpose - to house Jewish congregational worship, study and community meetings.
- The community is so central to the idea of a synagogue that any location in which ten Jewish men gather for prayer may serve as a synagogue - the quorum of ten, rather than the building itself, constitutes the synagogue.
- Synagogue - from the Greek synagēn - "to bring together"

### origin

- Temple of Solomon - sanctuary of Judaism - 955 BC to 586 BC  
after its destruction, Jews in exile establish shrines to imitate lost temple - no synagogues yet (community assembly place)
- origin of synagogue can be placed around date of the Hasmonean revolt (167 BC) when the Pharisees (scholars outside the traditional priests of land fertility) decreed a new system of written laws - the Pentateuch - which required meeting places which became synagogues
- the Torah, or Law, is the link btwn secular and religious activities - recorded first in Pentateuch, then orally  
The written Law, or Five Books of Moses, is preserved in Torah scrolls kept in every synagogue and are holier than the building itself
- The ark is the repository for the scrolls and is read from a readers platform or table called a bimah. Together they preserved the Law and allow it to be communicated.
- 70 AD - Romans destroy reconstructed Temple of Jerusalem - Jews now must strengthen other institutions and Judaism is from then on congregational rather than centralized
- Each community looked to its synagogue to preserve its faiths and traditions - religious, educational and community activities are all implicit in the latin term scuola (school) - used since 12c to denote both a synagogue and religious school

### synagogue and Temple

- synagogue - "lesser sanctuary", unequal to the Temple but a place to keep alive the memory of Temple services  
Temple as holier - serves all the people of Israel, sanctuary is  
synagogue - serves a local community; can be permanent in anything, anywhere
- ∴ very few synagogues were visually related to the Temple, perhaps only in detail
- Pieces from Temple - handwashing basin, courtyard  
vestibule, prayer hall, ark recess  
usually something is left unfinished in a synagogue to remind of the destruction of the Temple
- 19c - find much symbolism to indicate Temple reconstruction
- From the Talmud - must have windows, be tallest house in



other rules - synagogue is as same toothing as a man's house.

- may be a house of study
- can be bought and sold if money goes to buying an ark or bimah
- can never use a synagogue as a short cut yet must always have 2 doors

synagogue can have many secular purposes - legal decisions, commercial announcements, govt. proclamations, fines, festivals and weddings, asylum, law courts

- only structural requirements - enclosure for people, the ark and the bimah - can be movable pieces and altered for local customs - must simply be any unified space

• Many synagogues resemble churches or any type of building on the outside - latin-cross plan, however, is avoided as unsuitably christian and has no function in services

- However, main difference is the act of a fundamental rite enacted by a consecrated person in the east end of a church dictates church design - but Judaism does not have a primary focus point

• Mosques and synagogues share many features - important to public functions, can be anywhere, prohibit human images

- Differences in porticoes, forecourt, bimah not raised - as high as in mosque, furniture not rugs

• poverty, regulations and uncertain skills are many reasons why Jews often adapted existing buildings into synagogues

- other hindrances to the development of a Jewish architectural tradition - A Jew made practice at home, need for one to be oblivious to one's surroundings during prayer

• Throughout history, the shifting balance between constraint and freedom for Jews in Europe determined the architecture of the synagogue.

### Requirements for a synagogue

interior furnishing - an ark, a bimah  
seats for congregation

reading desks

storage for prayer books, shawls

hand washing basin, toilets

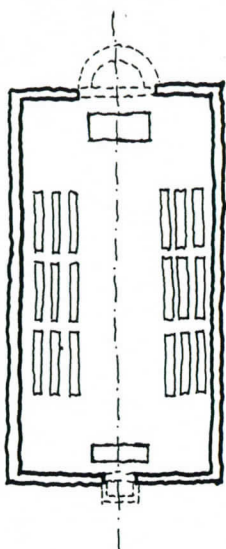
May have resting room for the sick and aged  
pulpit

choir and organ

arrangements for women (in orthodox)

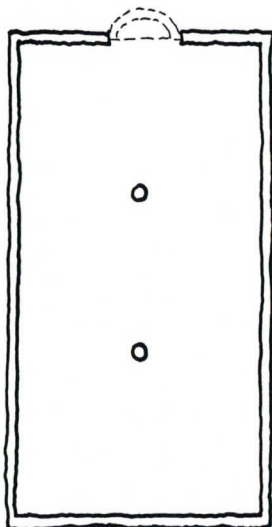
Annexes - vestibule, children's school, house of study, rabbinical courtroom, apartments, guild or fraternity rooms, community offices,

# TYPICAL SYNAGOGUE PLANS

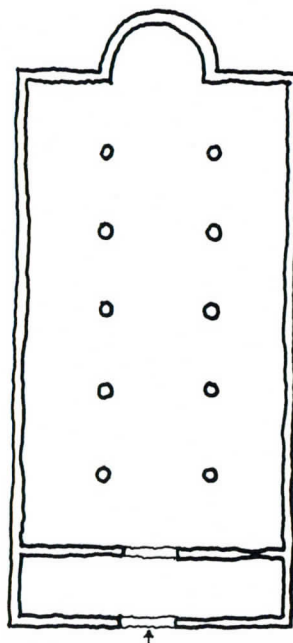


SINGLE NAVE

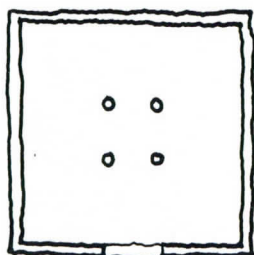
- optional ark and bimah recess
- vestibule on any side
- plan used in Venetian synagogues



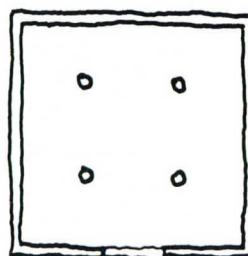
DOUBLE NAVED



GALLERIED  
TRIPLE NAVED



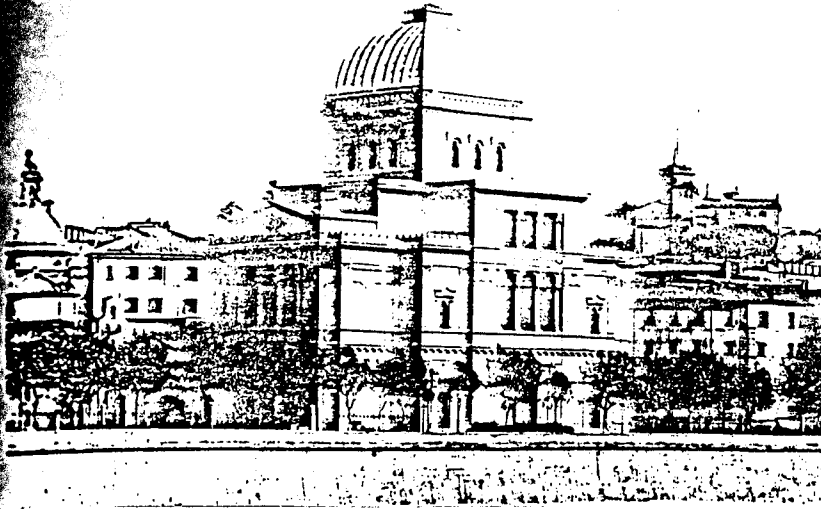
FOUR PILLAR  
TABERNACLE  
(Eastern Europe)



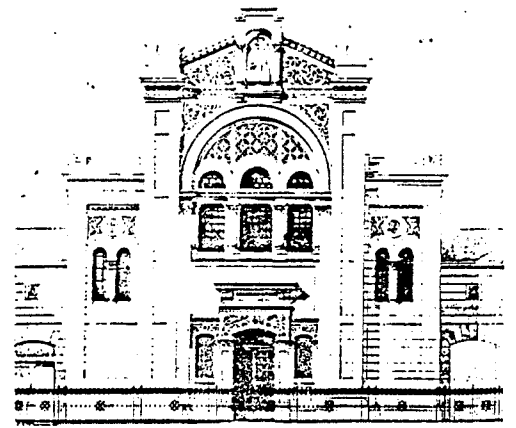
FOUR PILLAR  
TABERNACLE  
(Sephardic)



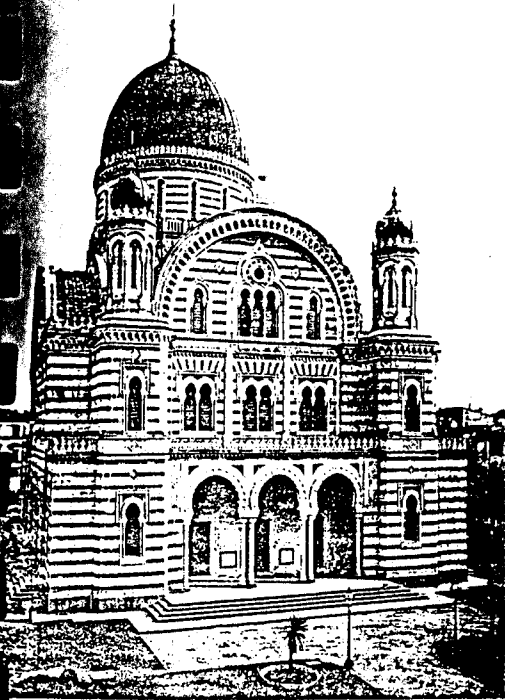
# ITALIAN SYNAGOGUES



Rome 1901-4



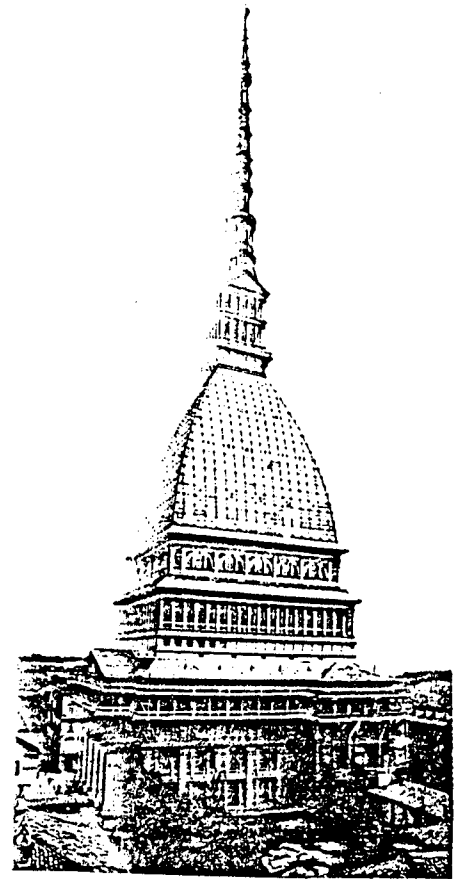
Milan (proposal) 1890



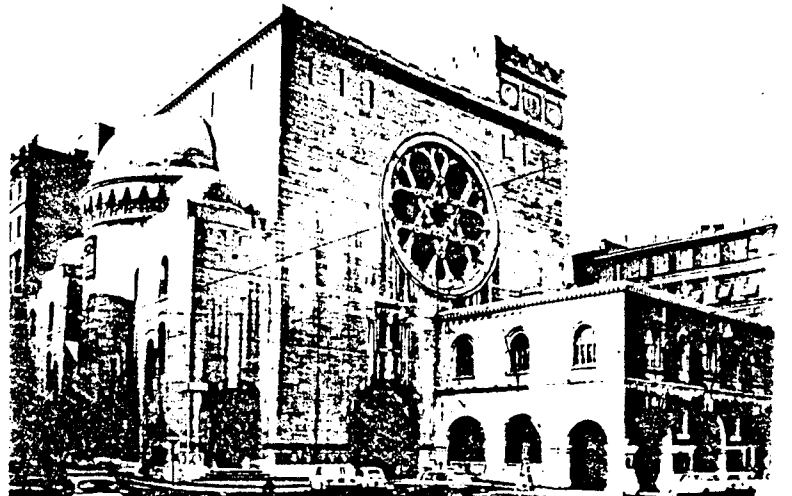
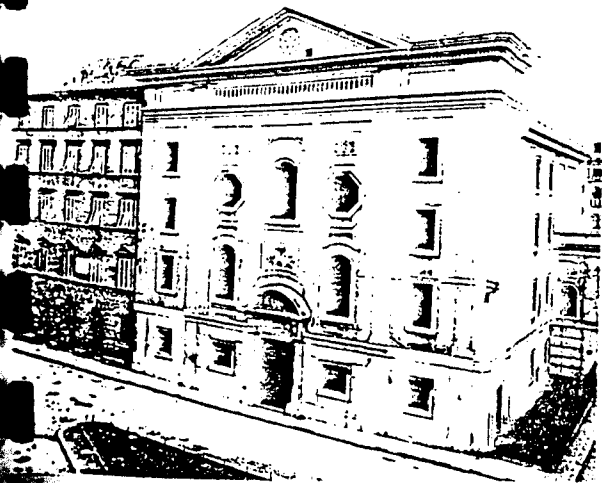
Florence 1874-82



Turin 1880-84

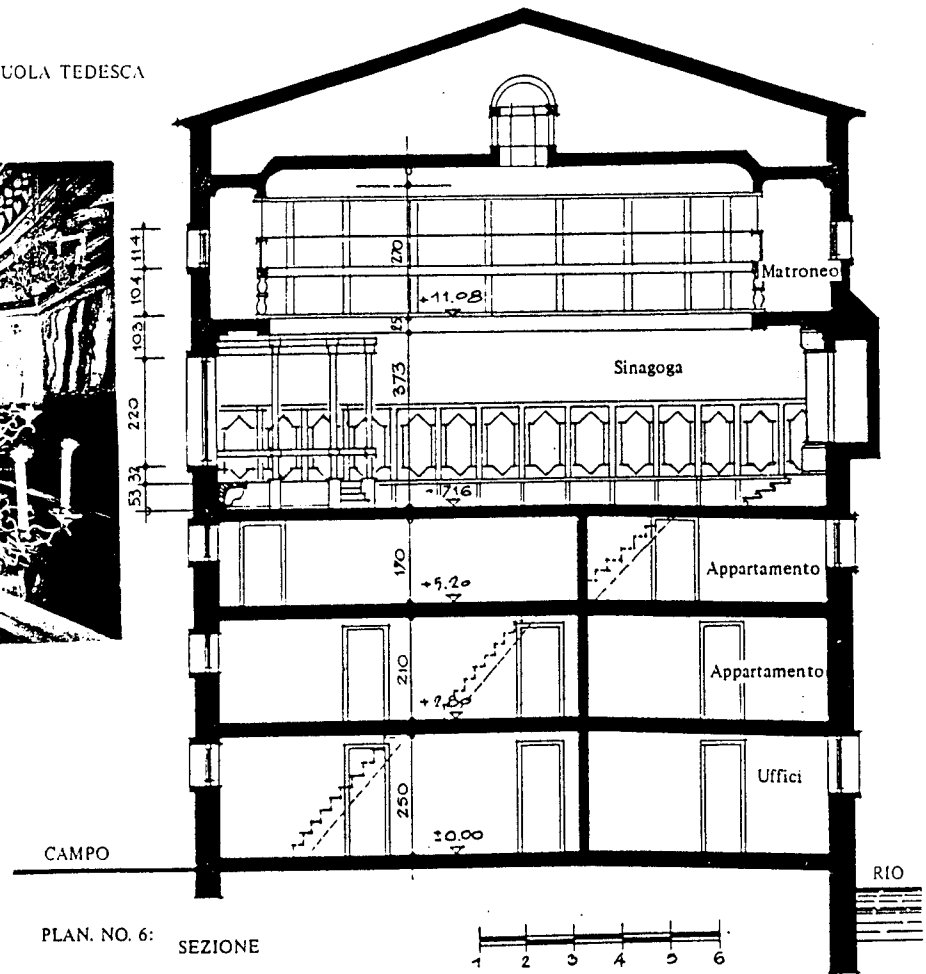
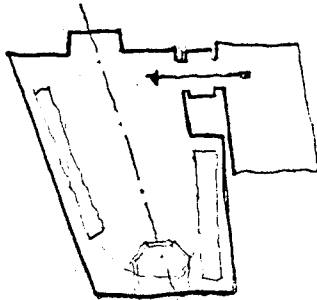
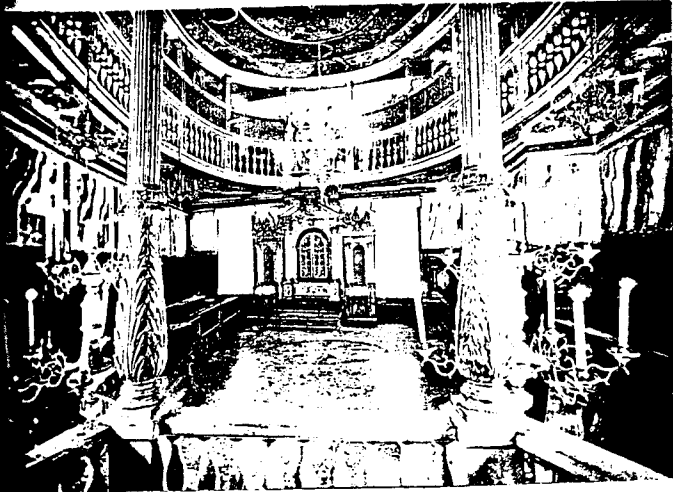


Turin (originally built as synagogue) 1862

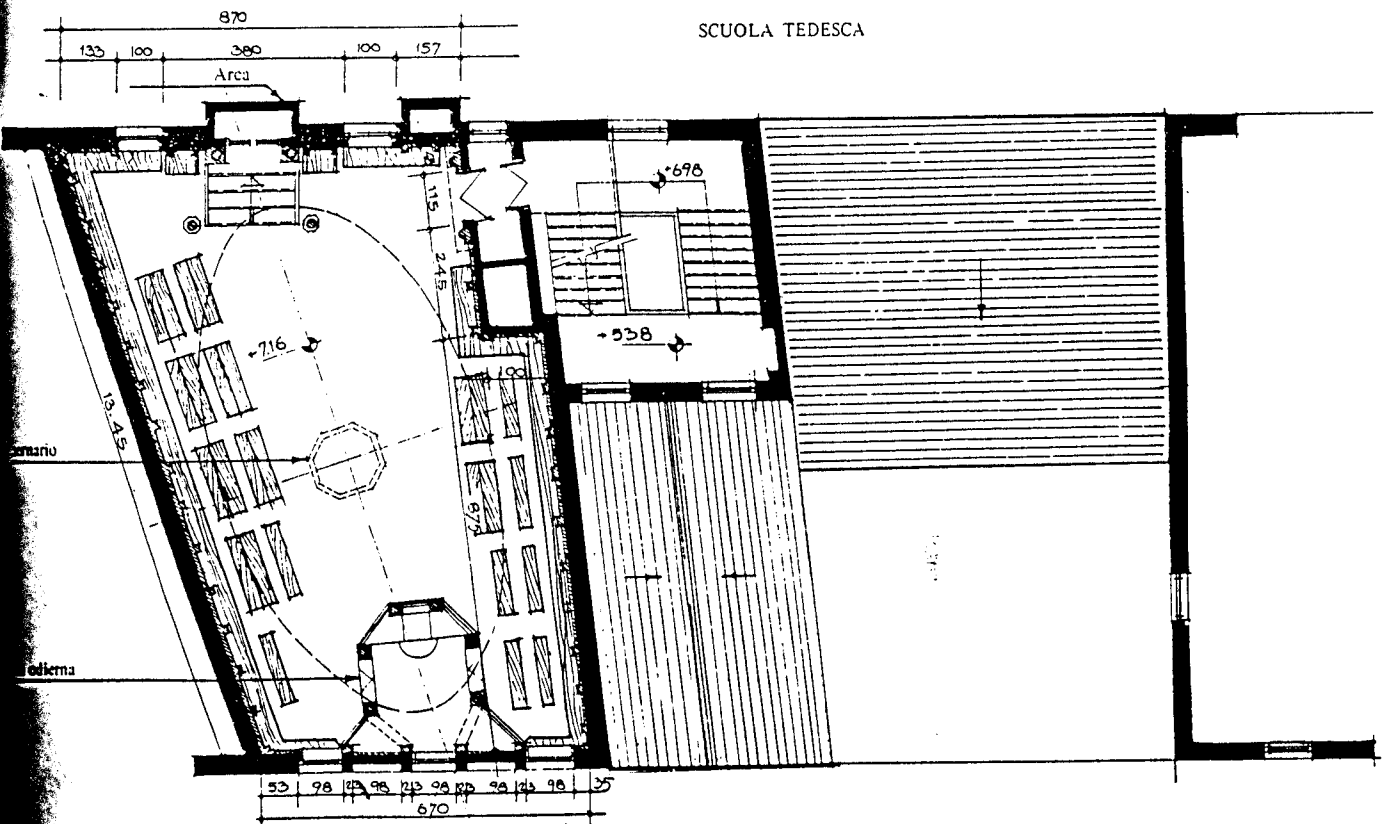


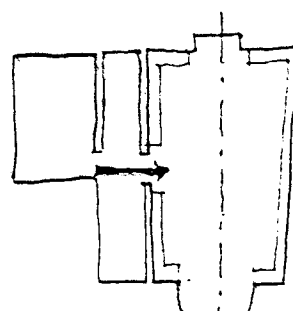


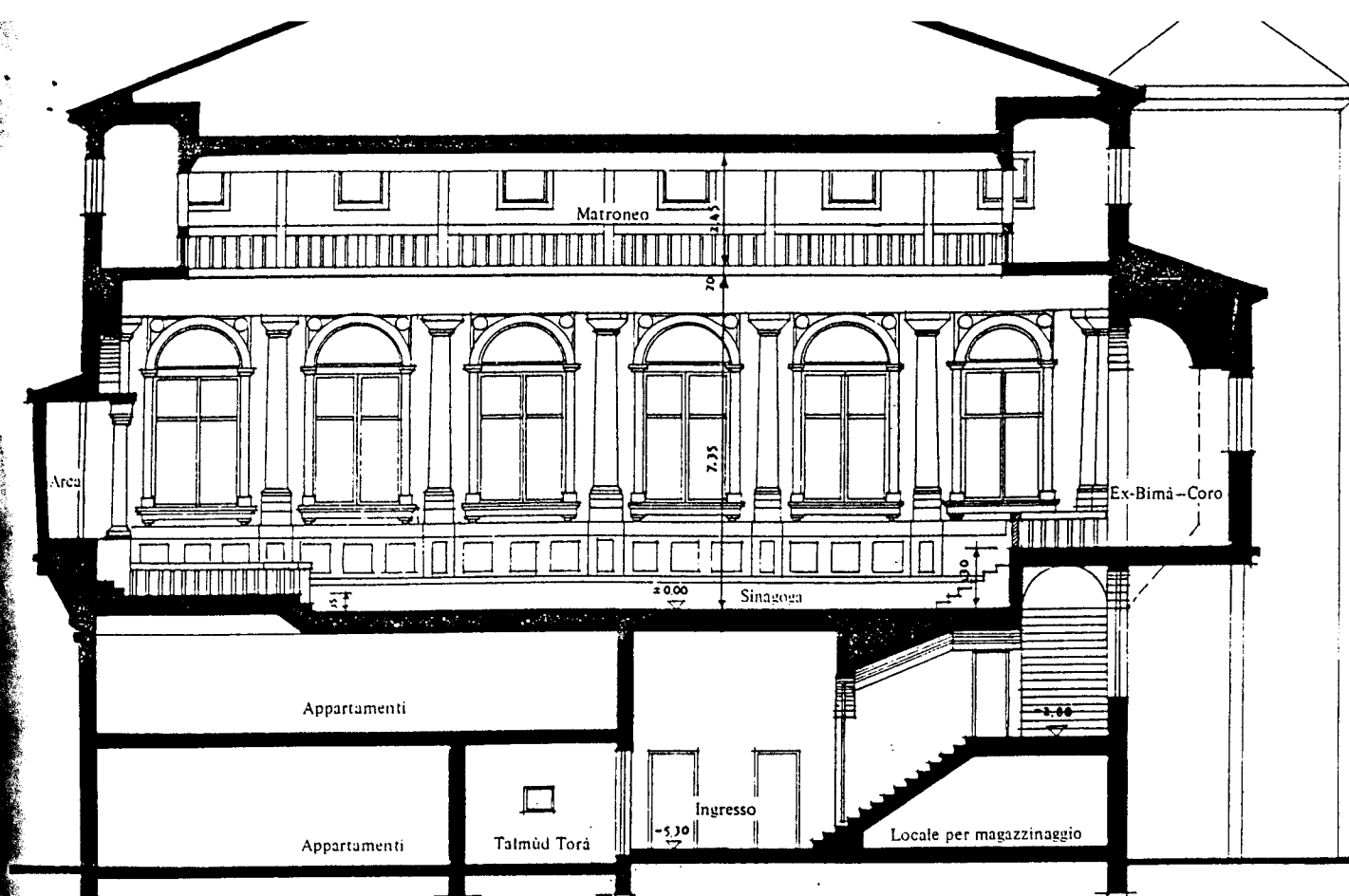
SCUOLA TEDESCA



SCUOLA TEDESCA



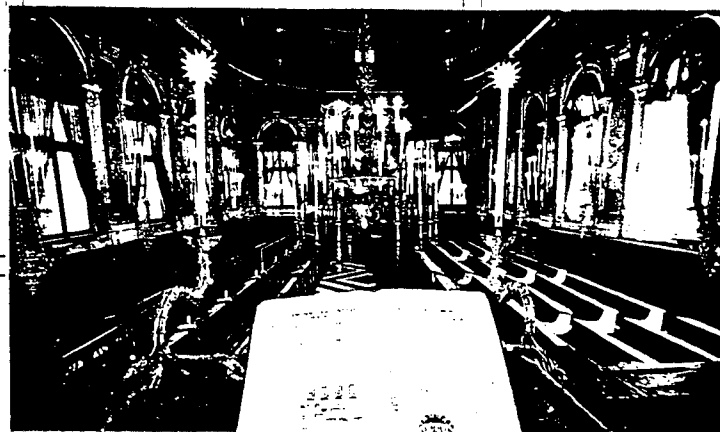
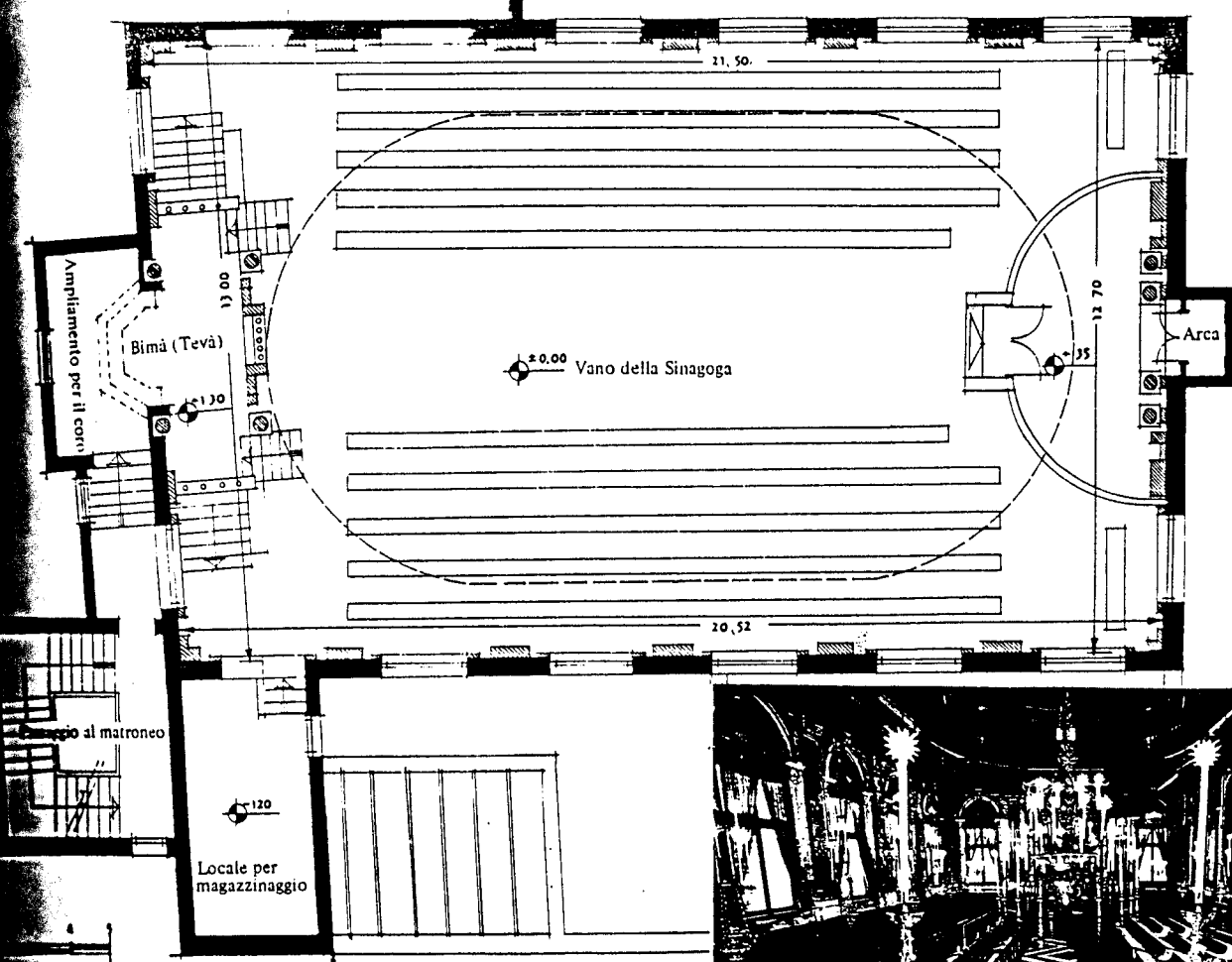




PLAN. NO. 16: SEZIONE

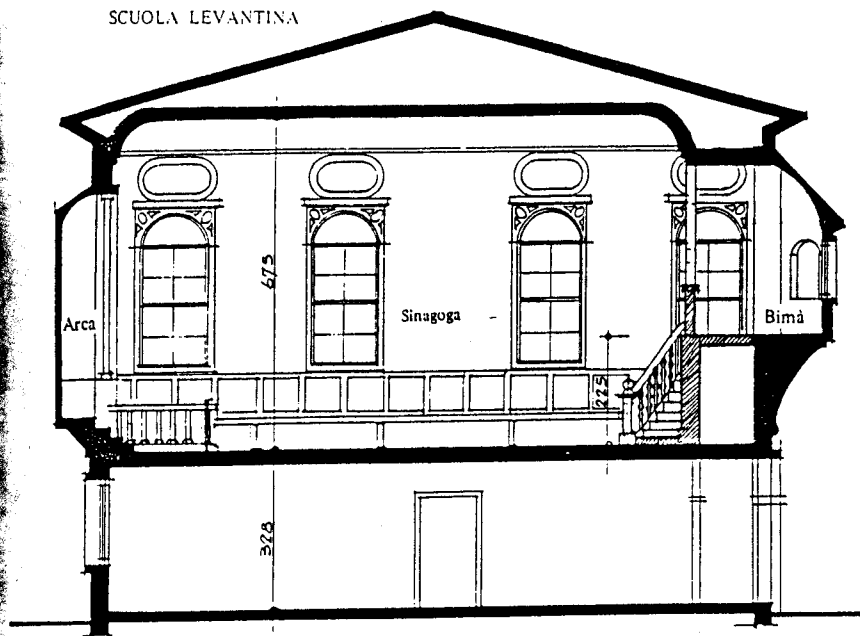
SCUOLA SPAGNOLA

PIANO DELLA SINAGOGA

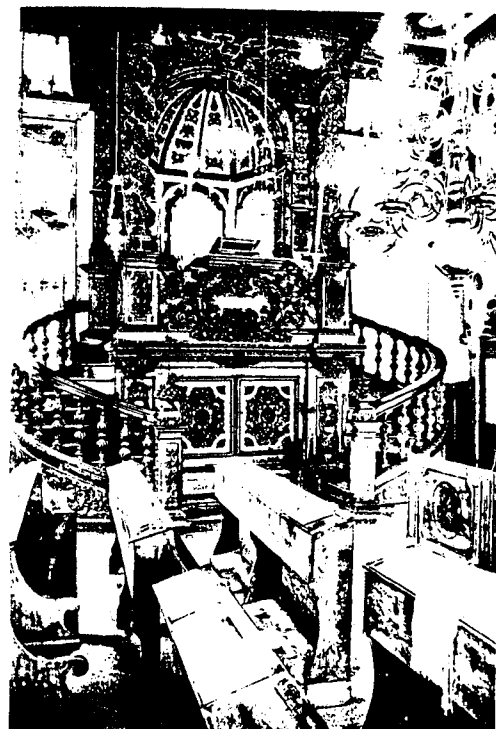




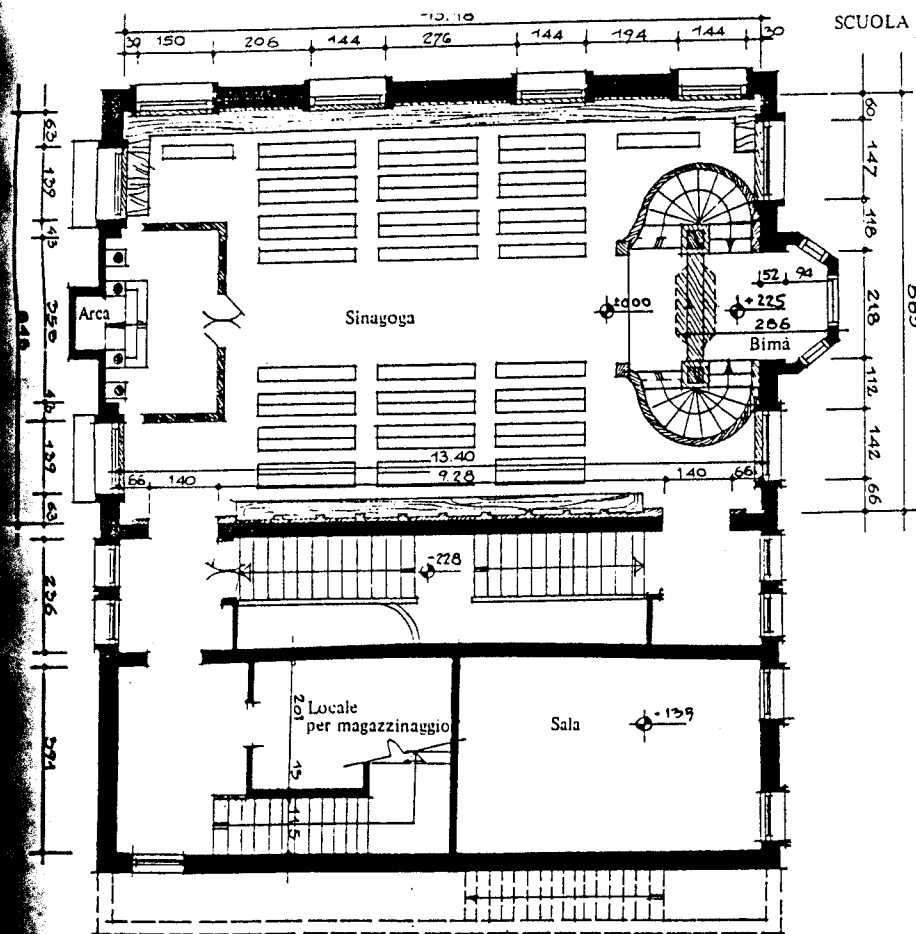
SCUOLA LEVANTINA



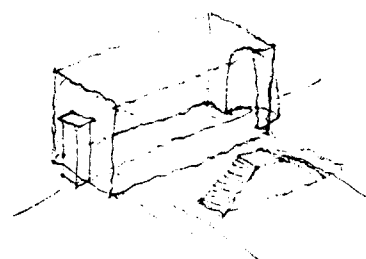
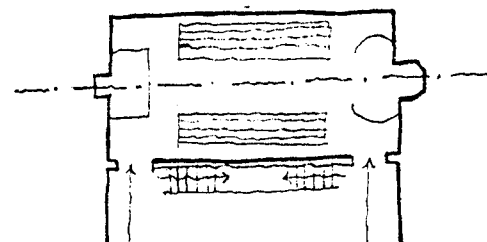
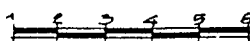
PLAN. NO. 20:  
SEZIONE



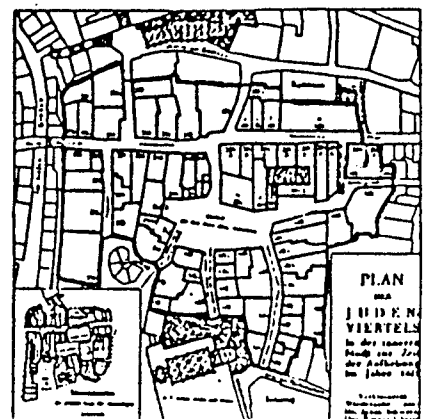
SCUOLA LEVANTINA



PLAN. NO. 18:  
PIANO DELLA SINAGOGA



## VENETIAN CONSTRUCTION



Venice founded on sand, silt and clay topped by gravel in high spots like S. Marco and Rialto in reality and due to the removal of Artesian water from the bedrock in the lagoon and the weight of bldgs, even S. Marco floors paving stones are laid directly on sand buildings placed on wood piles driven into clay 4-5 meters long, all @ foundation walls w/ planks at water edge

a moat is dug around a site and water drained off more piles are sunk into central space and ground is built up w/ layers of crushed brick and stone and rafts set in cement.

piles are then smoothed off 3 meters above high tide level to serve as a base for foundation walls. layers of crossed planks spread the load

Brick - most common building material because produced locally Roof tiles from same source

Finish is pointing - sealing joints w/ lime and stucco stucco made from powdered brick and marble grains - produces warm red color

Local stone in lagoon - use of white, marble-like limestone from <sup>Stia</sup> easy to carve, wears well

often used in detailing - frames, columns, doors, ballustrade Also use of some red marble from Verona - color intensifies when wet

Wood - indispensable for piles

also ceiling timbers, roof beams

oak is floated in; also larch and spruce

Vaulting rare to find, except in churches w/ cross beams - difficult due to shifting

wood spaced close and topped w/ planks - becomes rare & expensive

Terrazzo flooring evolves to take cracks, etc. made from 2 layers of crushed brick and stone set in cement and beaten down in layers

Glass industry in Murano supplies great amt. of glass even the poor use glass - supplies needed tight to the tight spaces of Venice

small amounts of iron used (corrosion) - for locks, fittings, hinges, railing

Heating - Porteghi unheated

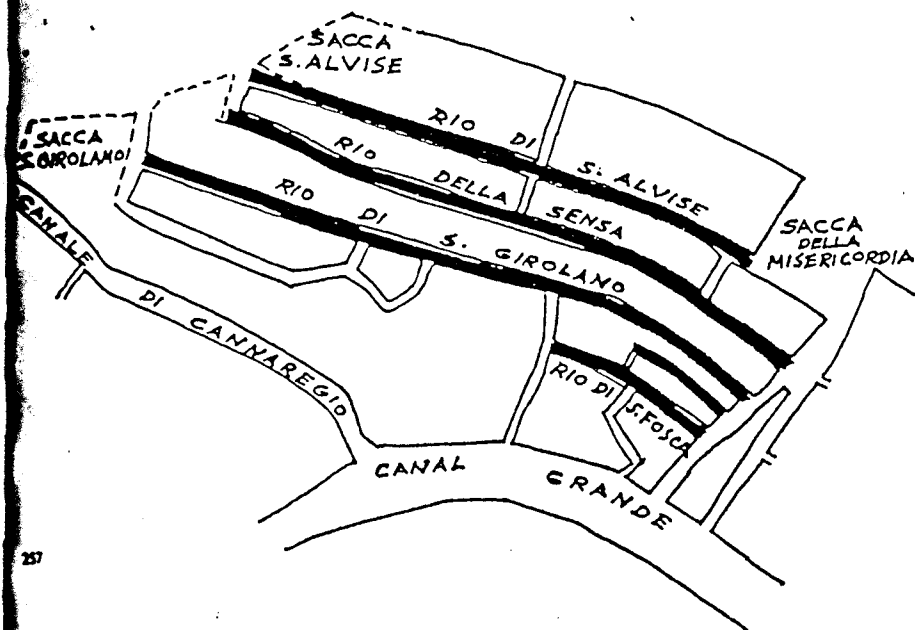
fireplaces on outside walls arranged one above the other  
and connected to the same chimney  
some fireplaces project out and supported on stone shelf  
to save interior space  
chimney pots become source of pride and decoration -  
truncated, upturned cones that prevent sparks from  
escaping up the flue

Courtyards - main source of water and light  
usually held stairs to save room - inside (til 16c)

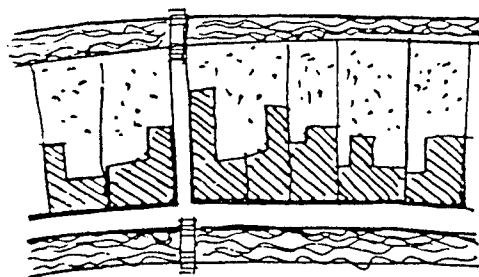
Water - canal water is saline and polluted w/ sewage  
rain water for drinking from public wells  
Palaces use drains on roofs to bring water into  
courtyards - then filtered through sand + stored  
Pozzi = well heads - often decorated in stone or marble

Sewage - removed w/ ebb and flow of tides  
solid refuse shipped to mainland or used as land infill

Balconies and sunterraces (altane) on roofs  
needed as source for sun and light, dry clothing  
often pieces added on at later date  
(can date balconies based on ballastrade design)  
altane - wooden platforms supported by brick piers  
on roof; reached w/ stairs from a window



255



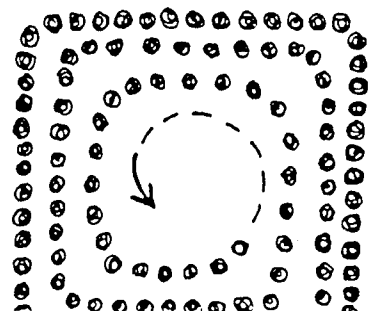
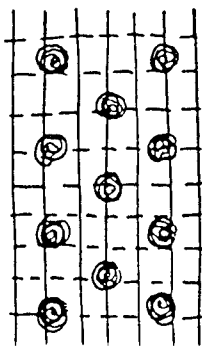
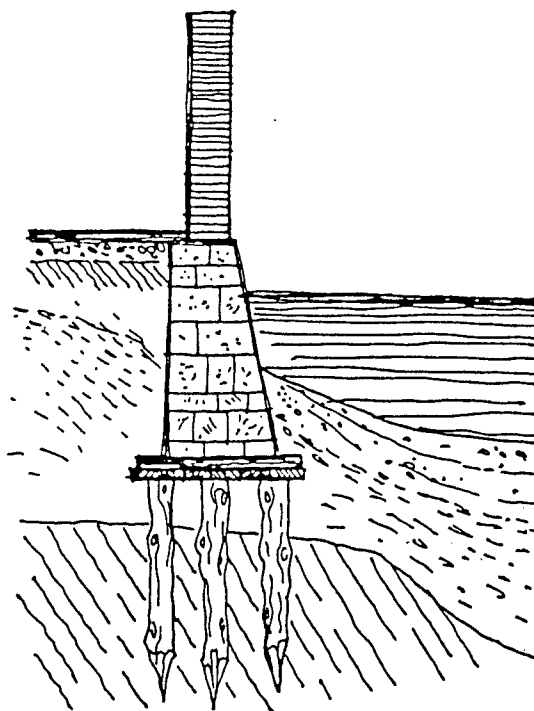
RIO  
ORTI E  
GIARDINI  
EDIFICI  
FONDAMENTA  
RIO

#### 254/7 Rila Cannaregio

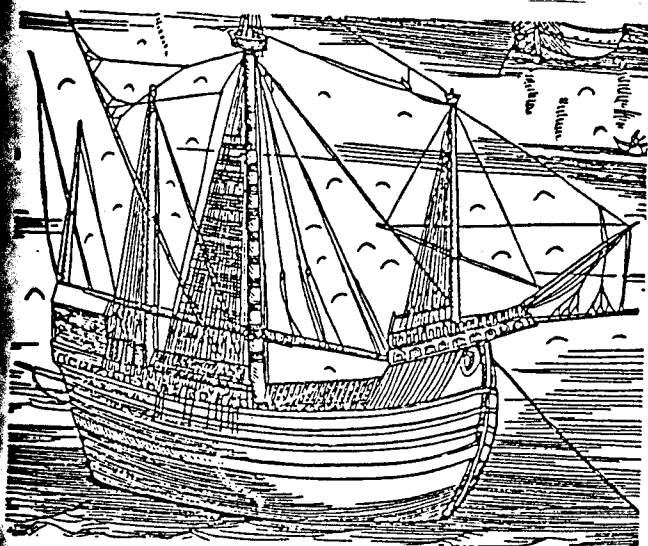
La disposizione dei rii nel sestiere di Cannaregio, zona settentrionale della città, mostra un andamento molto regolare, quasi artificiale (fig. 257). I lunghi percorsi dei rii determinano inconsuete prospettive, non prive di un loro fascino particolare (fig. 254, rio di S. Alvise). La successione regolare e ripetuta a zone parallele dei vari elementi urbanistici (rio, fondamenta, edifici, orti) costituisce uno schema molto razionale (fig. 255), in cui, tra l'altro, vi è il vantaggio dei percorsi pedonali e delle facciate esposti verso il sole, come si nota, ad esempio, lungo il rio della Madonna dell'Orto (fig. 256).

#### 425 Fondazioni degli edifici veneziani

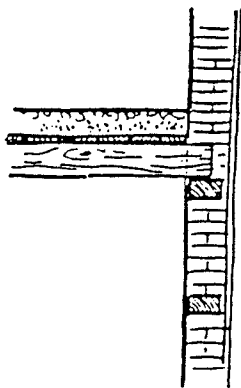
Le fondazioni degli edifici lagunari sono del tipo indiretto: pali di legno sostengono uno zatterone di tavole, su queste si elevano le fondazioni in blocchi di pietra d'Istria. I pali di legno vengono conficcati in uno strato di argilla e sabbia, detto "caranto", disposti a file multiple sotto i muri oppure a giri concentrici sotto tutta l'area dell'edificio.







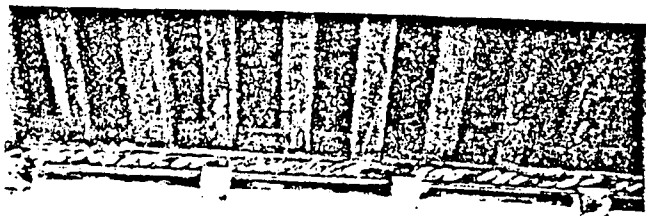
427



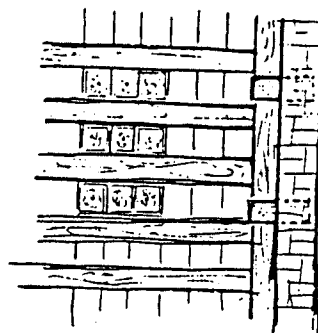
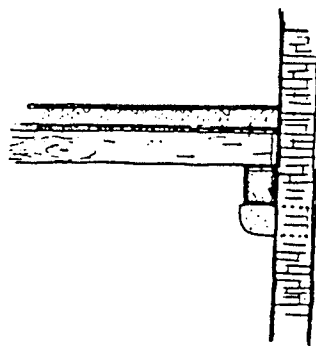
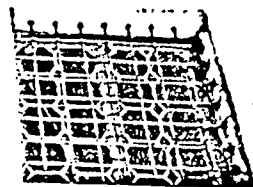
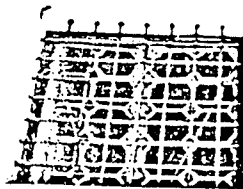
428

#### 427/8 Muro di edificio veneziano

La tecnica navale, qui esemplificata in un bel disegno di nave del XV secolo che appare nella pianta di Jacopo de' Barbari (fig. 427), ha suggerito molte soluzioni alla tecnica edilizia lagunare. Infatti anche gli edifici veneziani, più che appoggiare dovevano "galleggiare" sull'instabile terreno di fondazione della laguna. Nella sezione di un muro in mattoni di edificio veneziano si notano il solaio in legno e, a distanze più o meno regolari, le così dette "reme", listoni orizzontali in legno inseriti nella muratura. Essi servono a distribuire i carichi dal solaio uniformemente su tutto il muro ed, inoltre, ad assorbire elasticamente cedimenti parziali e piccoli assestamenti dell'edificio.



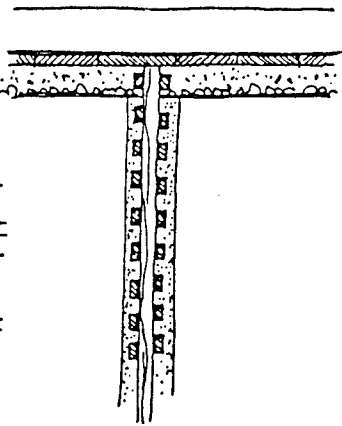
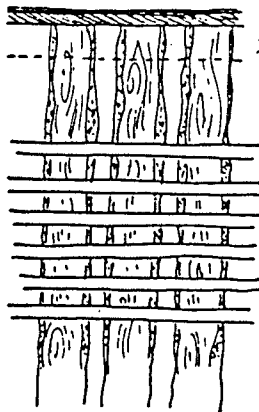
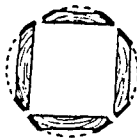
451



452

#### 451/2 Soffitto a travi scoperte

Le travi in legno, che sostengono il tavolato, vengono spesso appoggiate su una trave addossata al muro, questa a sua volta è sostenuta da mensole in pietra. La fig. 451 mostra uno di questi soffitti in Palazzo Ducale. Tavole, travi, trave principale e mensole vengono lasciati in vista e talvolta decorati costituendo il così detto soffitto "alla Sansovino".

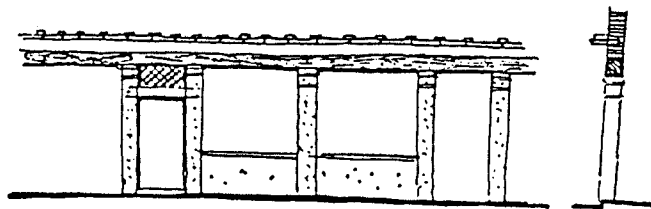


#### 453 Divisori Interni

I divisori interni nelle vecchie case veneziane hanno frequentemente una struttura in legno formata da grezzi assi verticali "scorzoni", su cui sono applicate delle liste, "cantinelle", orizzontali o inclinate; su queste viene steso il sottofondo e l'intonaco. Nel disegno in alto a destra è illustrato il tronco d'albero da cui si ricavano trave e "scorzoni". Per la loro struttura e la relativa elasticità i divisori così fatti possono essere paragonati al fasciame di una imbarcazione.



438



439

#### 438-9 Le botteghe

La serie di numerose aperture al piano terra che permettono di ricavare botteghe e magazzini ha richiesto una adeguata soluzione tecnica: pilastri verticali in pietra, architravi orizzontali in legno; una soluzione perfetta nella sua semplicità, qui illustrata da una serie di botteghe in campo S. Angelo.

# Glossary from *Palaces of Venice* Lauritzen and Zwickle

**Acqua alta:** the exceptionally high water, resembling a tide, which floods Venice

**Allata:** the wooden roof-top platforms used as terraces or for drying and airing carpets and linen

**Andron:** the ground-floor hall behind the water-gate entrance of a Venetian house or palace

**Arsenali:** the workers of the Venetian state shipyard

**Arsenale:** the ship-building and fitting yards, as well as the armament depot of the Republic

**Bailo:** the resident Venetian ambassador at Constantinople, the Republic's most important embassy

**Bucintoro:** the hundred-oared ceremonial barge of the doge

**Calle:** the Venetian town square

**Campo:** the Italian for house; used in abbreviated form in Venice to designate a palace

**Casa or Cà:** *Casa d'affitto*: a house or palace let by the owners  
*Casa domenicale*: the principal house of a branch of a patrician family  
*Casa di stazio*: a house resided in by the owners  
*Casa fondaco*: the early Venetian combination of a residence and a place of business  
*Casino*: a garden pavilion for informal entertaining  
**Ciadebo:** a lady's escort or *dierdaller servant*

**Colleganze:** the joint venture partnerships common in Venetian commerce and finance

**Compagnia delle calze:** a company of the hose, a club of young nobles identified by their parti-coloured hose

**Consiglieri ducali:** the six councillors of the doge

**Consiglio dei dieci:** the Council of Ten

**Cortile:** a courtyard

**Curia:** an arcade of columns extending the width of the main block, both on the ground and first floors, of a Veneto-Byzantine palace

**Doge:** the chief officer or duke of the Venetian Republic; elected for life

**Dominante:** the description of Venice referring to her dominant role over the cities and territories of the Republic

**Fanale:** a lantern from the stern of a galley

**Fondamenta:** a quay-like walkway along a canal

**Fondamenta nuova:** the sixteenth-century promenade built on the northern edge of the city

**Inonata:** the plaster surfacing of a wall

**Inquisitori di stato:** the state inquisitors; a civil office not to be confused with the Holy Office or Roman Inquisition

**Ligeti:** a roofed terrace; later an enclosed projecting balcony

**Libro d'Oro:** the registry of the Venetian patriciate begun in 1297

**Libro d'argento:** the registry of the Venetian *citadini* *originari* or citizen class

**Maggior Consiglio:** the Great Council or lower house of the Venetian Parliament

**Mantiana:** the state Library of St Mark housed in a building by Sansovino on the Piazzetta

**Marmorino:** marble dust mixed and applied like paint to counterfeit marble slabs

**Morea:** the Venetian name for the Peloponnese

**Palazzo:** a designation used in Venice only for the Doge's Palace

**Pali:** the larch pilings driven as foundations for Venetian buildings or, secondarily, mooring poles painted with the house colours

**Patera, Patera:** a flat stone plaque or ornament carved in bas-relief

**Pregati:** Venetian dialect name for balconies

**Piano nobile, piani nobili:** the noble or principal floor of a Venetian house; generally the first full floor above the ground floor

**Piazza:** in Venice used only for the piazza di San Marco, St Mark's Square

**Pietra d'Istria:** Istrian stone, a white marble quarried in Istria

**Pilaeus, pilae:** a marble panel placed between columns, often carved in bas-relief

**Portego, portego:** the central gallery-like hall of a Venetian house

**Procurator:** state administrators elected for life; originally three in number, later nine, they lived in the Procuratie Nuove on the south side of the Piazza

**Promissione Ducal:** a list of promises compiled by committee on the doge's death and sworn to by his successor

**Provveditor:** a high colonial and military administrative office, something like a military governor

**Quarantia Criminal:** the high criminal court of the Republic

**Rio:** the Venetian name for a canal, excepting the Grand Canal

**Riva:** a shore or bank, later paved and generally wider than a *fondamenta*

**Sansovino, alla:** a Venetian term for painted beam ceilings of a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century type

**Savio, Savii:** the 'wise men' of the Republic, elected for a short term and comprising a privy council for the doge

**Scrittino:** the scrutiny or process of election for Venetian offices; often specifically the ducal election

**Scuola:** lay confraternities of the devout engaged in charitable works

**Scutori:** the senators, sometimes called the Pregati, members of the upper house of the Venetian parliament; elected from the Great Council

**Serica:** the feast of the Ascension, the principal feast of the Venetian civic calendar

**Serenissima:** Most Serene, a title first bestowed on the ducal office by the Pope and then popularly extended to describe the Venetian Republic

**Serliana:** a three-light opening, the central of which is surmounted by a round arch, the flanking openings have flat lintels or entablature; from the sixteenth-century architectural theoretician, Sebastiano Serlio

**Sesiere:** one of the six administrative sections into which Venice is divided

**Sottoportego:** a public passageway beneath a building; occasionally with an arcade along a *rio*

**Terrazzo:** flooring made of crushed marble fragments laid in a brick powder pate

**Terrafirma:** the mainland provinces of the Republic

**Torreille:** the flanking towers of a Veneto-Byzantine palace

**Treppehaus:** a building made specifically to house a staircase

**Two/three-light window:** a window opening divided into two or three sections

**Vera du pozzo:** a well-head

**Volta del canal:** the bend in the Grand Canal where the flow changes from a southerly to an easterly direction

## APPENDIX

This thesis began as an exploration into a concept of Hebraic space. Although research and time has led the primary thesis in a new direction, I continue to be interested in this study and include the following as a sub-thesis to be explored further.



## Thesis Statement

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A Hebraic concept of space is inherently linked to an awareness of the daily rituals of people and the presence of past events.<sup>1</sup> For a Jew, the importance of a place is attached to the memories of events which occurred there, and not solely to the physical permanence of structure. For a nomadic people such as the Jews, only those things which can be incorporated into a daily life in motion can become part of a concept of space. As Thorlief Borman writes:

"An analysis of the Hebrew verbs that express standing, sitting, lying, etc... teach us that motionless and fixed being is for the Hebrews a nonentity...it does not exist for them. Only 'being' which stands in inner relation with something active and moving is reality..."<sup>2</sup>

An existence of the memory of past events sustains the notion of space as a continuum, forever changing and growing with the Jewish people. The thesis will use the structure and memory implied within historical urban layering and build upon it to achieve a physical presence of temporality.

1. B. Zevi, "Hebraism and the Concept of Space-Time in Art", Speech to Congress of Italian Jewish Communities, Rome 1974
2. T. Borman, Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1961

"In the entire Old Testament we do not find a single description of an objective "photographic" appearance...Noah's Ark is discussed in detail...it is striking that it is not the appearance of the ark that is described but its construction. What interests the Israelite is how the ark was built and made...The appearance is not directly alluded to by a single word...The Israelite also when he confronts other objects such as buildings, is interested in them not for their appearance but first for their use; they are for him tools or implements of human or divine actions."

"The Israelite finds the beautiful in that which lives and plays in excitement and rhythm, in charm and grace, but also and particularly in power and authority. It is not form and configuration which mediate the experience of beauty, as for the Greeks, but the sensations of light, color, voice, sound, tone, smell and taste..."

"If Israelite thinking is to be characterized, it is obvious first to call it dynamic, vigorous, passionate and sometimes quite explosive in kind; correspondingly, Greek thinking is static, peaceful, moderate, and harmonious in kind."

"Our way of thinking is different from that of the Hebrews; we first of all conceive of the altar, i.e. its form, and then the materials out of which it is made while presupposing that an altar formed and used in this way 'could well be made out of copper. For us, therefore, the form and the matter of anything are separate, and the form is the primary consideration; for the Hebrews the material is the thing. If an altar is wood, then it could not possibly be copper, for that would result in a totally new and different altar, namely a copper one..."

"An analysis of the Hebrew verbs that express standing, sitting, lying, etc. teach us that motionless and fixed being is for the Hebrews a nonentity; it does not exist for them. Only "being" which stands in inner relation with something active and moving is reality to them...Thus he dwells in a place who has alighted there or can depart therefrom..."dwelling" for the Hebrew is related to the person who dwells, while for the Greeks it is related to the residence and the household goods."



Bruno Zevi - Hebraism and the Concept of Space-Time in Architecture

- Hebraism: a concept of space, not associated with places or things; the God of Israel is a God of Events
- An Architecture of time; growth before being, formation ahead of form
- An awareness of space breeds static things, a heresy to Jews who believe in change and redemption
- Hebraism in Art opposes:
  - Classicism-based on a priori orders
  - Illuminism-based on universal absolute ideals
  - Cubism-based on the abstraction of matter
- Hebraism is dedicated to everyday behavior; the theology of human action
- There is the story of the Jew who visits a 'restored' ghetto but cannot really feel it, for the old, unhealthy Jewish quarter within him is more real than the hygienic space around him; he becomes a ghost of the past; the new spacial configuration has replaced the time sense of memory
- Expressionism is the only art for the Jew because it is the only movement to demolish all aesthetic tabus without erecting new ones
- Hebraism believes in the validity of existing in a state of contradiction i.e. the music of Schonberg
- Trajan's column as a historic example of the negation of the static, classical in favor of the narrative, dynamic, fluid
- Architectural history has always been in a struggle between the release from space and it's static constraints and time consciousness
- Jewish Architecture as described in the Bible is valid only for its use and not its image (vs Egypt, for ex)
- F.L.Wright's work as an example of a Hebraic Architecture, based on contradictions, dissonance, multidimensional; extols space by demolishing fetishes; a continuum between landscape and building; action architecture
- Greek space: Golden Calves, static, pacific, harmonious, temple as object, proportions, colonnades, ideals, the Academy
- Hebraic space: inventiveness, time, dynamic, vigorous, passionate, object as used, 'growth, development, the only rule is change

## OUTLINE FOR THESIS RESEARCH

### I. The Concept of Hebraic Space

#### A. Hebraic Space

1. Bruno Zevi, Hebraism and the Concept of Space/Time in Architecture
  2. Thorlief Borman, Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek
  3. Stanley Tigerman, Post-Modernism is a Jewish Movement
- #### B. Sacred Space
1. The Old Testament
  2. Rykwert, On Adam's House in Paradise
  3. Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and Profane

### II. Historical Background

#### A. Jews - Definition

1. Encyclopedia of Christianity
2. Symbols and Christianity

#### B. Italian Jews

1. Vivian Mann, Gardens and Ghettos - good historical summation
2. Cecil Roth, The Jews in the Renaissance - the Arts, Humanities
3. Fortis, Jews and Synagogues - Guidebook- Rome, Venice, Florence, Livorno
4. Fortis, The Ghetto on the Lagoon

#### C. The Venetian Ghetto

1. Jewish Art Treasures in Venice - good summation
2. Cecil Roth, History of the Jews in Venice - detailed study
3. Fortis, Jews and Synagogues

#### D. Synagogues

1. Ancient Synagogues
  - a. Temple of Solomon
  - b. Ostia
2. Carol Krinsky, The Synagogues of Europe - The book on synagogue architecture
3. Breffney, The Synagogue - The renaissance in Italy
4. Wischnitzer, The Architecture of the European Synagogue - general
5. Specifics on Venetian Synagogues
  - a. Guidebook
  - b. Krinsky
  - c. Breffney
6. R. Meier, Recent American Synagogue Architecture

#### E. Jewish Mysticism

1. Yates, The Hermetic Tradition in Renaissance Science
2. The Cabala- Definition in Christian Encyclopedia

### III. Graphic Information

- A. Transformation of Ghetto- Historic
- B. Campi of Venice- Spatial
- C. Venetian Construction
- D. Modern Venetian Projects

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